Je parle français

A PORTRAIT OF LA FRANCOPHONIE IN CANADA

Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data

Main entry under title:
Je parle français: A Portrait of La Francophonie in Canada

Issued also in French under title:
Je parle français : un portrait de la francophonie au Canada

ISBN 0-662-27895-X
Catalogue No. CH4-40/1999E

1. Canada, French-speaking.
2. Canadians, French-speaking – History.
3. Canadians, French-speaking – Social life and customs.
4. Canadians, French-speaking – Intellectual life.
5. French Language – Canada.
I. Canada. Canadian Heritage.

FC136.J4 1999 971'.004114 C99-980271-2
F1027.J4 1999

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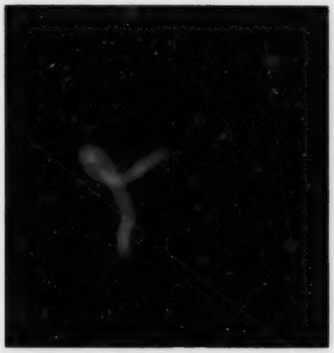
101-03219/

"Canada is only for people who yearn to do something great in life and gain honour and fame through arduous and extraordinarily brilliant deeds."

Marc Lescarbot,
French writer,
1609



Message from the Prime

You have in your hands a book that brings to life the richness, diversity and remarkable vitality of Canada's Francophones.

On the threshold of the third millennium, there are some seven million Francophones in Canada and another two million who speak French as their second language. Every day, new people arrive to swell the numbers of our Francophone communities and contribute to their development. In Canada, almost a third of the population can say, as the book's title suggests, "Je parle français".

The pulse of La Francophonie in Canada, whose heart is in Quebec, can be sensed all over Canada from the Acadian seaboard to the far side of the Rockies. In all parts of Canada, French is used to communicate and express solidarity. The language makes its presence clearly felt in schools, community centres, on radio and TV, in newspaper headlines, on stage, in books, in mutual aid organizations and cooperatives.

Canada is proud of the people building its future who make French heard throughout a land stretching for more than 6,000 kilometres from coast to coast. We are particularly proud to be hosting the VIII^{e} Sommet de la Francophonie in Moncton, New Brunswick, in 1999, as well as the Games of La Francophonie in the greater Ottawa-Hull area in 2001.

Minister of Canada

This cultural wealth, vitality and pride are the reasons why Canada was involved in the international Francophonie from the very beginning, participating in the creation of its many institutions and helping it become an increasingly important global forum.

In an era of globalization, one of the greatest challenges for governments is to preserve and promote cultural and linguistic diversity. Canada has firmly committed itself to this cause, particularly through the Official Languages Act and our contributions as a Francophonie member country. In the years to come, we will continue working in this direction to promote French language and culture both at home and abroad.

Like the country itself, La Francophonie in Canada is infinitely rich and varied. So, I invite you to explore it with me and all Canadians who feel such a close attachment to it.

Jean Chrétien

French as an integral part of Canadian identity

French belongs to Canada in the same way a tree holds on to the earth – by its roots: roots that stout-hearted, enterprising men and women first planted in Acadian soil and Cap Diamant rock and then took with them over the Rockies and above the plains of the Far North.

Some of these early settlers already had deep roots in the New World, while others came later from all parts of the world to settle. Together, they began to build a country where two great linguistic families would learn to demonstrate openness and flexibility in respecting those who were already established, while allowing newcomers their fair share of space.

With their pride in their ancestral heritage, French-speaking Canadians showed that they were determined to speak, write, sing and celebrate their language. They taught French to their children in order to perpetuate their love of it. But living and working in French on such a vast continent has been a perpetual challenge. Nevertheless, for some 400 years Canadian Francophones have continued to spread the language and culture that are an integral part of their way of being and interpreting the world.

Their determination to implant French in North American soil has helped create a model of diversity that is unique in the world: a country fortunate to have two official languages and major cultures, onto which hundreds of other cultures and languages have been grafted. All Canadians can hold on to the things that make them different and contribute their strength, energy and creativity to the common purpose of building a country that fulfils all our dreams and aspirations.

Canada and *La Francophonie*

In those days, there was no Francophonie and not even a Canada. But all along the great river Cartier named the St. Lawrence, women and men coming from France looked at the horizon and said to themselves: this is the place where we are going to live. It is here we are going to build our future, raise our children, clear the land, sow and harvest. We are going to create a country.

And with words like these and their Old World way of life, they built the New World. Moving from wonder to sacrifice, from fearfulness to hope, in the special spirit of solidarity that isolation breeds, their speech took on a distinct new sound – the Canadian accent.

They had a huge task before them. The country they saw and wanted was as big as a continent. It was cold and far away. Nevertheless, they took hold of humanity's most powerful tools: cooperation, courage and faith. In so doing, they created a new homeland for French language and culture.

Four centuries later, the outcome of the patient, unrelenting efforts of these resolute early settlers is spreading out to Europe, Africa and Asia at the speed of light. Together with other similarly inspired voices, French-speaking Canada is making itself heard throughout the world.

Still with its Canadian accent, of course!

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Francophone roots in *every part* of the country

There were people living in America long before the Europeans came.

Jacques Cartier, Canada's "official" discoverer, realized as much shortly after landing at Gaspé in July 1534, when he made it clear to the indigenous population that the territory was changing hands. Cartier noted in his writings that "On the 23rd day of the month, we had a cross made bearing the inscription LONG LIVE THE KING OF FRANCE... and this was done in sight of several of them. We planted the cross on that spit of land while they watched us do it."

France had just discovered Canada and the land's original inhabitants had just discovered the French. Later, both peoples would learn how to come to terms with their differences through cooperation, sharing and compromise.

When Cartier landed on the shores of the New World, 250,000 Montagnais, Algonquins, Iroquois, Hurons and other Amerindian nations shared the land that they had explored and tamed over the previous 10,000 years. Two million people lived over the 20 million square kilometres of North America, speaking a total of 300 languages. In their own right, these original inhabitants had started families, formed communities and established alliances.

Suddenly, the sound of a new language, French, was added to the continent's linguistic mosaic. This was the language spoken by men travelling along rivers in big sailing ships or birchbark canoes. For the French were not satisfied with just crossing the oceans – they soon started to explore the continent's inland waterways.

In this endeavour, they sought the assistance of the native people, who knew the land, to learn how to survive on it in winter and how to get from place to place.

Samuel de Champlain explored as far as Georgian Bay on Lake Huron in 1615. Pierre-Esprit Radisson travelled from the source of the Mississippi to Hudson Bay between 1658 and 1663. Twenty years later, Louis Jolliet went down the Mississippi without reaching the Gulf of Mexico, something René Robert Cavelier de La Salle would do in 1682.

Pierre Gaultier de La Vérendrye, an explorer born in Trois-Rivières, set up a fur trading business with his son that stretched from the Great Lakes to the Rockies, including Alberta and the American Northwest.

Like so many anchors dropped along an endless river, the newcomers settled villages on cliffs and in valleys: Port Royal, the cradle of Acadia in 1605; Quebec City, the future colonial capital, in 1608; Trois-Rivières, in 1634, where a passing Algonquin saved the French from dying of starvation by teaching them how to fish under the ice; and Ville-Marie, the future Montreal, in 1642.

For a long time, the Great Lakes remained a distant, forbidding region for the French. Nevertheless, they established a few settlements there such as the Jesuit mission at Sainte-Marie (1639-1649) and a string of forts that would later become cities like Sault Ste. Marie at the mouth of Lake Superior, and Detroit in what would later become the state of Michigan in the United States.

In 1713, after ten years of war in Europe and in the American colonies, France was forced to cede eastern Acadia (modern-day Nova Scotia) to England and the large trapping areas west and north of the Great Lakes. For the Acadians, the dream of New France came to a brutal end on September 5, 1755, when they were gathered together at Grand Pré and uprooted from their native soil.

It was only the beginning of the break-up of the French Empire in America. In 1760, after five years of war, the British captured Louisbourg, Quebec City, Trois-Rivières and Montreal. The conquest of North America was complete.

But it was not the end of the great Francophone adventure in America. ■

Champlain, explorer and visionary

Samuel de Champlain, a fisherman's son, was born around 1567 in Brouage, France. By the time of his death in 1635, he had fathered a country.

Samuel de Champlain's story is one of the most remarkable in the history of New France.

In ten expeditions, Champlain explored Canada's rivers and shorelines looking for places to settle, new trapping areas and, above all, a river passage to the China Sea that would give access to the riches of the East. He explored and mapped the coastline of the future Acadia, a part of New England, the St. Lawrence Valley and Georgian Bay. After founding Quebec City in 1608, he chose the Island of Montreal as the location for the present-day city.

In New France, Champlain experienced starvation, fought the Iroquois and the English, organized the daily life and laid the foundations for an isolated community that had to be almost totally self-sufficient.

A serious writer in his own right, Champlain published four accounts of his travels as well as two sets of memoirs. These would later serve as the basis for the work of most authors and historians writing about New France. Indeed, in the words of one of his biographers, Abbé Laverdière: "Champlain played an enormous role in laying both the civil and religious foundations of this country. His rectitude and integrity, the breadth of his knowledge and his privileged access to the most influential people in the French Court undoubtedly lent his words the force of ultimate civil authority. But another outstanding quality of Champlain's writings is that he is virtually the only one of our earliest writers that we can truly consider an authentic, historical source."

On Christmas Day in 1635, Samuel de Champlain died in Quebec – in the country he had fathered. ■

The *coureurs* des bois

Versailles wanted its subjects to set up house and get down to work as soon as they arrived in Canada.

But, for many of these young colonists, Versailles seemed ever so far away and the absent king's voice increasingly faint. There was so much to see, do and discover. Adventure beckoned at every turn.

Naturally, the first priority was to get on good terms with the natives. In 1610, Champlain authorized one of his travelling companions, Étienne Brûlé, to winter with the Algonquins and learn their language. But their language was not the only thing Brûlé learned from his hosts – he also learned how to live as a free man. Attracted by dreams of adventure and riches, thousands of young men soon followed him along the country's trails and rivers.

These adventurers also learned another lesson – that alliances can be very useful, especially when you change them at the right time. So, when the English briefly occupied Quebec in 1629, Brûlé and the other coureurs des bois thought nothing of working for the occupying force.

Between 1670 and 1760, thirteen thousand licences to operate in the woods were issued in Montreal; but there were also many unauthorized coureurs des bois who were almost as despised by the colony's law-abiding citizens as pirates were in the mother country. Governor Denonville described the problems in these words: "When they return, they behave like debauched aristocrats in the taverns and, in open contempt of the peasants, they now feel it is beneath their dignity to marry their daughters... What is more, they are no longer prepared to stoop to farm work and only have ears for talk of returning to the woods and carrying on as before."

Many people feel that the contribution of these early entrepreneurs was not as valuable as that of the other builders of New France, such as the farmers, administrators and missionaries. Nonetheless, the coureurs des bois, though often despised by their contemporaries as mere libertines and adventurers, still left a precious legacy to all Francophones in America – a love of initiative, enterprise and freedom! ■

Migratory movements *Acadia*

In 1755, while other French Canadians were working hard to settle along the St. Lawrence, Acadians were being harshly expelled from their valleys and peaceful coves, and forced into exile.

Deprived of their possessions and humiliated in the country they had built, thousands of Acadians took refuge in Louisiana and New England. Others were deported to the West Indies, France, England and even Australia. More than 5,000 people died in these deportations. Out of 15,000 Acadians, only 2,500 remained in Canada.

Scarcely a century later, their descendants, who had resettled the ancestral homeland, were obliged in turn to look abroad – life had just become too hard and the land too poor. As a result, from 1851 to 1871, more than 260,000 left the Maritimes for fertile land and well-paid jobs in New England. Other Acadians settled in Quebec, Ontario and Western Canada.

Nowadays, the Acadian heart continues to beat in Canada's maritime provinces. But you can feel the Acadian pulse throughout the country and even in the United States, where Acadians have instilled their hope, courage and pride. ■

Migratory movements *Quebec*

After the signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1763, some 60,000 French colonists chose to remain in Canada. By the middle of the 19th century, the Francophone population of the province of Quebec had reached over one million, faithfully holding on to their language, legal system and traditional culture through their political institutions and community spirit.

From 1840 to 1930, a major migratory movement to New England deprived Quebec, North America's Francophone heartland, of more than 900,000 inhabitants, attracted by good, steady wages in the textile and forestry industries.

In the face of this wholesale emigration, Quebec leaders raised a cry of alarm. One of them, Curé Labelle (1833-1891), who had devoted his whole life to try and revive the pioneer spirit of his fellow citizens, was afraid that emigration would become the "graveyard" of his people.

As a result, many Quebecers stayed and others came back from the United States, often under pressure from the clergy, to settle other parts of Quebec, Ontario and the western provinces.

Today, Francophones live in every province and territory of Canada. ■

A people

shaped

by their land

For 400 years, Canadian Francophones have steadfastly settled and prospered all over the territory occupied by the first colonists.

The Canadian Francophone community has matured and flourished. It has extended its reach and increased in numbers – mainly in Quebec, the cradle of the New World Francophone community, as well as the heart and soul of La Francophonie in Canada. Drawing inspiration from the same cultural sources, Acadia has likewise developed, but in a different way. The same goes for the other Francophone communities that have become more strongly rooted in each province and territory.

Canadian Francophones have built cities – big, beautiful North American cities. They have founded villages, often in far outlying areas. They have scraped rock and mined minerals from the earth. They have taken from huge forests the wherewithal to build, shelter and heat an entire continent and enable it to read and write. They have cast their nets in the sea, ploughed the land and harvested the fruits of their labour.

Francophones have also done business with their neighbours, and with the entire world. They have built enormous dams, at home and abroad. They have designed and built planes that now fly over all continents. They have invented snowmobiles, discovered vaccines and other remedies, and enriched the French language with new words.

Artists from all disciplines have celebrated this land in song and visual art. Canada's scenery and wide open spaces, as well as the glory, suffering, spiritual qualities and distinctive habits of its inhabitants, have inspired stories, paintings, songs, plays and films all over the world – on the biggest stages and in the finest galleries, from Paris to Hollywood and from Rome to Abidjan.

Today, the six million Francophones who live in Canada's largest province represent more than 80 per cent of Quebec's population. Another million live in other parts of Canada, among 23 million Canadians who usually speak English but a third of whom claim non-French or non-British origins.

Francophones are everywhere: from Point Pelee, the southernmost spot in Canada, to Nunavut, the newest of Canada's three territories, in the North; in Victoria and the Yukon in the West; and in Labrador and Cape Breton Island in the East. They live in communities with names like La Tabatière, Chéticamp, Fauquier, Pointe-aux-Roches, La Broquerie, Gravelbourg, La Malbaie and Caraquet – names Francophones themselves have chosen.

They are also running prosperous businesses in many Canadian cities such as Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Regina, Hamilton, Toronto, Ottawa, St. John's, Saint John, Charlottetown, Halifax and Moncton.

They acknowledge Quebec City as the seat of the overall North American Francophone community, as Samuel de Champlain had wished – the ancestral focal point and place of periodic "pilgrimages" for Francophones from all parts of the continent.

They are equally proud of Montreal, a capital of innovation, science, multimedia, biotechnology, aeronautics, design and, of course, the French language. ■

Acadia

Acadians are not ones to boast. So when they speak about an "entrepreneurial revolution" in their region, you'd better believe them – especially when the facts speak for themselves.

In New Brunswick, the number of Acadian businesses has doubled during the 1990s. In Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, Acadian fishermen have taken up seafood processing, an industry abandoned by large foreign corporations during the 1970s' crisis. Many have turned their know-how to good use in creating fish farming enterprises.

In Moncton, host city for the VIII[e] Sommet de la Francophonie, Francophone business people have played a key role in the city's economic revival. Written off in the early 1980s as a potential "ghost city", Moncton is now the centre of a dynamic region on the leading edge of communication technology because of its favourable business environment and educated, bilingual workforce. Moncton has become a model of cooperation and economic development with people coming from all points of the compass to learn the secret of its success.

All Francophones in the Atlantic Provinces, from Port-au-Port to Restigouche, from Caraquet to Madame Isle, are talking of entrepreneurship, economic development, the use of new technology and the pursuit of excellence.

The creation of the New Brunswick Economic Council in 1979 has been one of the driving forces behind the entrepreneurial revolution in this part of Acadia. Elsewhere, for instance in the French-speaking communities of the Cape St. George and Anse-à-Canard regions in Newfoundland, economic development plans have been drawn up on the basis of local business initiatives, with a particular emphasis on using local resources.

The creation of the Université de Moncton in 1963 has undoubtedly been the principal catalyst of Acadian revival. Most Acadian leaders of the last few decades went there, including Michel Bastarache, Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada. The Université de Moncton has also formed a number of partnerships with local communities, particularly through research and development centres working on peat, sea-based products and the food industry.

The cultural sector in the Francophone Maritimes is also thriving. There is now a very impressive list of Acadian recording artists and a profusion of publishing houses, dance troupes, theatre companies and film production companies. Among them are several would-be Antonine Maillets or Marie-Jo Thérios capable of writing or singing about Acadia more or less everywhere in the world.

New Brunswick, the only officially bilingual Canadian province, plays a leading role within La Francophonie together with the Canadian and Quebec governments. ■

Quebec

Quebec has the largest land area of all Canadian provinces. It is also the most multi-facetted province.

The Quebec coastline stretches from Hudson Bay, past the Labrador Sea and the Atlantic Ocean, to the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the St. Lawrence River. All along the coast, the scenic beauty of places like Minganie, the Gaspé peninsula and the Magdalen Islands is surpassed only by the warmth of the people who live there, a common occurrence throughout the province – in places like Lac-Saint-Jean, Saguenay, the Laurentians, Beauce, Poste-de-la-Baleine, Tête-à-la-Baleine, Duplessis and Mauricie.

The main centre of La Francophonie in Canada and the only area with a French-speaking majority, Quebec has taken several steps to ensure that the French language is preserved and protected. Quebec remains, nonetheless, a pluralist society that is taking advantage of globalization to develop its trade links with the rest of the world.

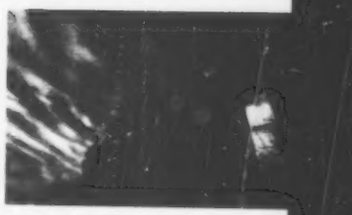
As a result, Quebec works hard to make the most of the export potential of its high-tech industries such as aerospace, pharmaceuticals, telecommunications, hydroelectricity, metallurgy and, of course, information technology.

Relations between Quebec and the rest of the world go back well before the arrival of new technology: there was already a Quebec representative in Paris in 1882. Today, Quebec is active on a wide range of international fronts.

Centuries ago, fires were lit along the St. Lawrence to indicate the presence of a human community; today, signals with a similar purpose are transmitted by fibre optic cable throughout the world. Through technology, Quebec Francophones are signalling their ambition to forge ahead to all those who would like to share their hopes and dreams. ■

Montreal

The Metropolis! That says everything about Montreal. Montreal, the big city – vibrant, swirling, hectic and teeming with activity. Hardworking and focused by day, boisterous and lively by night.



Since its founding in 1642 by Paul de Chomedey, sieur de Maisonneuve, Montreal has attracted people from all over the world – people who come to do business, settle, fulfil their dreams and live them out. The second largest French-speaking city in the world, Montreal is also one of the most cosmopolitan cities on the continent. Naturally, French is spoken here – English as well, but also a hundred or so other languages.

Anyone looking for a challenge will find it here. Montreal can be justly proud of its tradition of excellence and leadership in a number of fields.

Aerospace, pharmaceuticals, biotechnology, information technology, telecommunications, pulp and paper, and, naturally, arts and culture are all areas in which Montreal and its inhabitants excel.

Montreal is also well known on the whole continent for its multimedia expertise. The giant American corporation, Microsoft, now has a presence there since buying the young Quebec company, Softimage, which made a name for itself by doing the animation for Spielberg's film, *Jurassic Park*. Montreal also has its Cité du multimédia, a facility housing some twenty different companies.

Greater Montreal is both the driving force of the Quebec economy and a magnet for Francophone culture. Whether you come from Gaspé, Sudbury, Caraquet or Chicoutimi, if you have a song to sing, a piece of music to play, a film to make, a poem to recite or a play to put on (in French, of course), you can always head for Montreal.

Artists from around the world know Montreal for its art galleries, exhibition halls, impressive performance facilities, numerous theatres and many music festivals. When on tour, they always make sure it is one of the stopovers. ■

The national capital, *Ottawa*

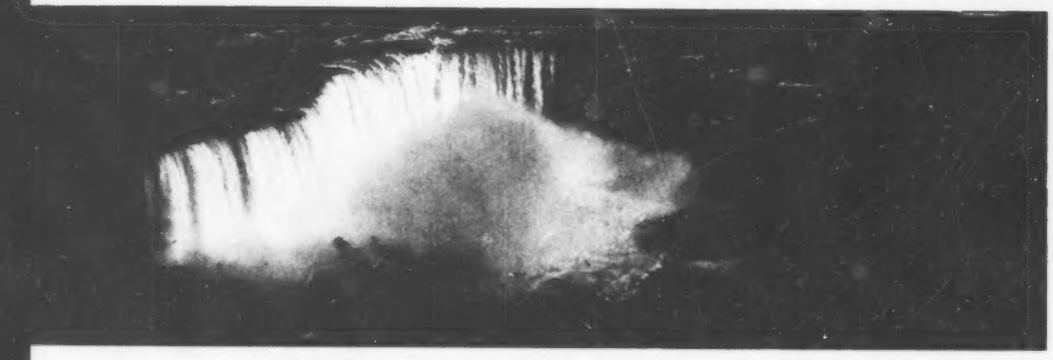
In 1610, Samuel de Champlain fell under the spell of the Ottawa River Valley. A little while later, the French, who had just founded Montreal, came to settle. The King of France granted seigneuries on both sides of the river – Petite Nation on the Quebec side and l'Orignal on the Ontario side.

However, Ottawa did not really assert itself until the War of 1812 against the United States. Then, in fear of an American invasion, the Rideau Canal was built from Bytown (Ottawa) to Kingston. In 1857, Queen Victoria made Bytown the capital of Canada.

The city now began to develop in a fitting manner. In 1848, the University of Ottawa opened, with courses taught in both French and English. The seat of federal government attracted an educated class of people who demanded social and cultural infrastructures worthy of a national capital.

Gradually, museums and galleries of international rank were built on both sides of the river and Ottawa's theatres began to feature leading international artists. The city currently boasts three daily newspapers, including *Le Droit*, the only French-language daily in Ontario. Definitely, the National Capital of Canada has become the place to be!

Huguette Labelle, president of the Canadian International Development Agency and Chancellor of the University of Ottawa, was born and grew up in Rockland, a village very close to the national capital. "Ottawa, because of its dual linguistic identity," she says, "truly represents Canada." ■



Ontario

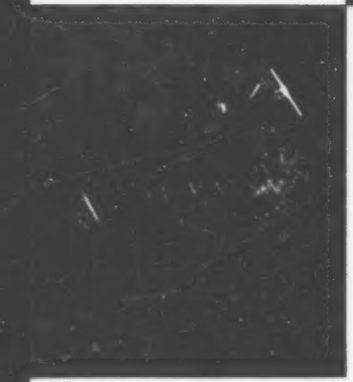
It was especially after construction of the Trans-Canada Railway that Eastern Ontario Francophones began to look northwards.

In 1883, the Canadian Pacific Railway reached Sudbury and acted as a springboard for economic development of the region's subterranean resources. This led to the discovery of the largest nickel deposits in the world at Sudbury, major gold deposits at Timmins and Kirkland Lake, and rich silver deposits at Cobalt.

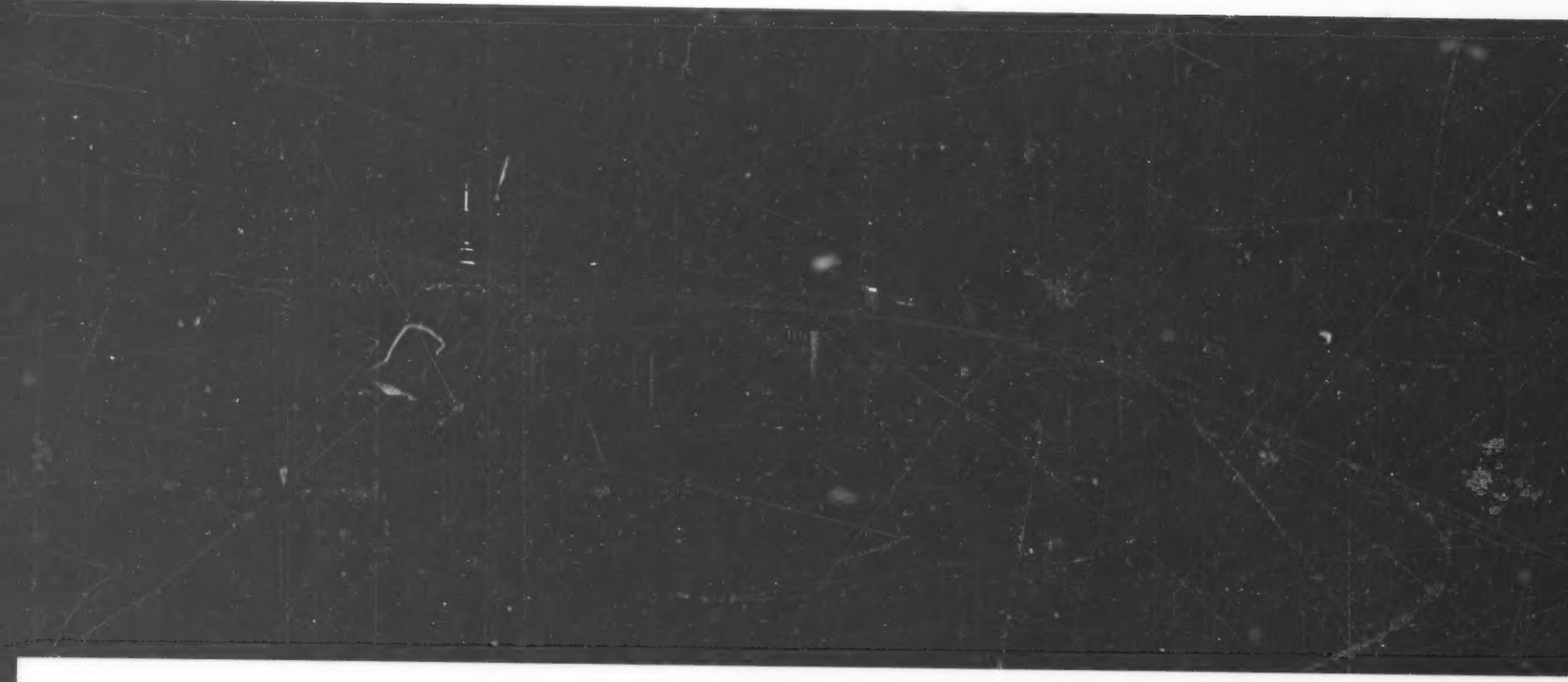
The railways also transported thousands of Quebec families attracted by mining jobs or new farmland.

Among these families were ancestors of Omer Cantin, editor of the weekly newspaper, *Le Nord,* in Hearst. "The Cantin family, the couple themselves and their children," he explains, "got off at Hearst station, determined to succeed. They immediately got to work clearing the land, but in due course, also provided the local community with much of its social and economic infrastructure."

Many Francophone entrepreneurs and their families have left their mark on this region, particularly in the logging industry. You only have to think of names like Mallette in Timmins, Dubreuil in Dubreuilville, Goulard in Sturgeon Falls, Perron in Cochrane, and Fontaine, Lévesque, Lecours and Gosselin in Hearst.



Parents in that part of the world also handed down to their children a tendency for "itchy feet." People who chose to work outside the natural resource sectors were often obliged to leave the region. Some of them reversed their parents' move and went back to settle in Quebec. Most, however, stayed elsewhere in Ontario, particularly in the southern urban area bordering Lake Ontario and Lake Erie, between Canada's two auto manufacturing centres of Oshawa and Windsor.



Canada's largest metropolis, Toronto, is also located in this region. Each year, Toronto absorbs more than 150,000 immigrants from all parts of the globe, including French-speaking countries. All come for the same reasons: the region's booming economy, the headquarters of various national and multinational companies, the banking sector and the auto and manufacturing industries.

Others, like Paul Bosc, come to fulfil a specific dream. A wine-grower by trade, Paul Bosc chose vineyards in the Niagara area in preference to those of his native Bordeaux. Twelve years after founding the Château des Charmes winery in 1978, he became the first Canadian wine grower to win a gold medal at the Vinexpo de Bordeaux. ■

The Prairies

Prairie, prairie and more prairie. Endless space – blinding white under the winter sun or a soft green that slowly changes from spring to fall into an explosion of rich, golden tones.

Explorer Pierre Gaultier de La Vérendrye was the first European to go right across the Prairies as far as the Rockies. He reached the present location of modern-day St. Boniface on the Red River in 1783.

It was in this part of the country called Manitoba ("God who speaks") that the French initially settled as fur traders at the start of the huge settlement process in Western Canada.

A significant number of French took Indian wives, giving rise to a new people, the Métis, who, under Louis Riel's leadership, later negotiated Manitoba's entry into Confederation in 1870.

Meanwhile, other Francophones from Lower Canada and Europe came to swell the ranks of the Red River Colony. They founded a string of farming villages around St. Boniface, including La Broquerie, St. Pierre-Jolys, St. Anne and St. Agathe.

The forebears of Judge Alfred Monnin, for example, emigrated from Switzerland. He speaks of Franco-Manitobans as an "active, proud community with a future." This sense of pride is partly due to the considerable number of long-standing institutions, like the Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface, that have left their mark on La Francophonie in Canada.

French Manitoba has given two major artists to the French-speaking world: writer Gabrielle Roy and singer Daniel Lavoie. Hart Rouge and Carmen Campagne are from Willow Bunch in Saskatchewan, home to the giant Beaupré corporation. This village is located in the same region as Gravelbourg and Ponteix, established around the turn of the 20th century. Further to the north, several other Francophone villages deserve to be mentioned: Batoche, Gabriel Dumont's village, where the Métis lost the battle of 1885, and Belgarde, the birthplace of Jeanne Sauvé, the first woman to become Governor General of Canada.

Some Francophones carried on to Alberta. They initially came for the fur trade, before settling down. People like Théodore Getot and Eugène Ménard left France to establish Legal, north of Edmonton.

Other Francophones went further north to places like Rivière-la-Paix, Grande Prairie, Plamondon, Lac La Biche and Falher, one of the largest honey-producing regions in the world.

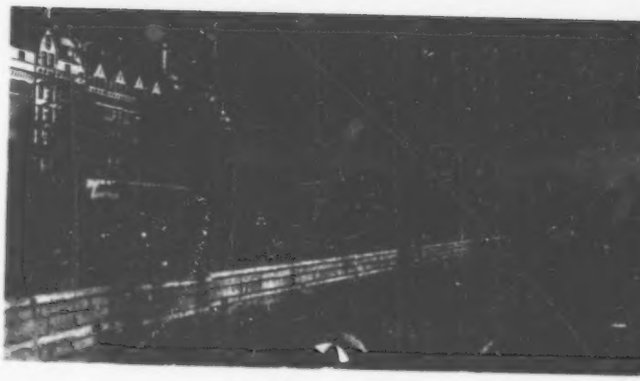
"I now know that work never killed anybody," laughingly declares farmer Fernand Denis of Vonda in northern Saskatchewan. His father, who came from France, had what it took to help build a country as vast as this.

Today, the Prairies are home to a number of dynamic Francophone communities with colleges, schools and many groups working to promote the French language. ■

On the Far Side of the *Rockies*

Everything in British Columbia is larger than life – the mountains, the trees, the rivers and the land itself. The same goes for the hearts of the people.

The province's first European inhabitants came at the end of the 18th century, accompanying Alexander Mackenzie, the first European to cross the Rockies. Others came later to build forts as employees of the Northwest Company. Later, the logging industry developed and it is still the main driving force in the provincial economy.



Marie Bourgeois is a Quebecer of Acadian origin who has been living in British Columbia since the 1970s. She is currently director of the Maison de la francophonie in Vancouver. "Live in British Columbia and function in French? Why not? Francophones have been doing it since the 18th century."

And as in other large Canadian cities, the French presence in Vancouver has evolved. Because it has the mildest climate in the country, British Columbia has attracted many Francophones from other parts of Canada. These, added to the many Anglophones who want to learn French and immigrants from Francophone countries settling there, make up the 250,000 or so people in Vancouver who speak French. ■

North of 60

Under the aurora borealis in the huge expanse of the Canadian Arctic, La Francophonie is quietly making a place for itself following in the footsteps of Émilie Tremblay, a 19th century Dawson City shopkeeper.

There are certainly not a lot of Francophones in the Far North – less than 3,000 all told. But we must remember that despite constituting one third of the Canadian territory, this region is one of the least populated areas of the globe. And French is respected everywhere here as an official language, together with English and several native languages.

Francophone settlement here is very recent. Several Francophones came during the 1898 Gold Rush, but most moved on. Those who live in the Far North today, as well as most of the Francophones who live in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut, arrived after the 1970s.

Pierre Fournier is one of these. Originally from Rimouski in Eastern Quebec, he runs the Sunshine Valley Guest Ranch, an ecotourist centre in the Yukon. "I've been living here for 20 years," he says. "What appeals to me is the more relaxed pace of life, the natural surroundings and the land's magical, mysterious qualities." ■

The diversity of La *francophonie* in Canada

Canada's urban population is a microcosm of the whole world.

Canada has now become a richly varied, multi-ethnic, multicultural society, and this is reflected not only in the pages of city phone books, but also in the neon lights of our major urban Chinatowns, the smells of outdoor markets, exotic restaurant signs and places of worship of all the great religions – churches, temples, mosques and synagogues.

A third of Canada's population acknowledge non-French and non-British origins. They come from more than 150 countries where French is either used or taught as a matter of course.

For these people, Canada offers linguistic opportunities like no other country in the world. They find that in Quebec and many other areas of the country they can keep and use French as their everyday language, enrol their children in a French-speaking school and become members of the Canadian Francophone community.

From the time the Loyalists came at the end of the 18th century to the arrival of Kosovo refugees at the end of the millennium, many communities of different national origins, including German, Italian, Portuguese and Greek, have settled among Francophone Canadians and prospered.

Up until the beginning of the 1960s, integration into the French-speaking population mainly took place in Quebec, primarily through mixed marriage. That is how many Francophone politicians, journalists, academics, professionals and business people have acquired names like Ryan, Johnson, de Bané, O'Neil, Abud, Burns, Watters, Young, Mulroney or Welch. For example, the name Mélançon is very widespread in Francophone Canada but unknown in France; the Mélançons in fact all have a common Scottish ancestor, *Millanson.*

Because of its "open door" policy, Canada is a haven for French-language immigrants from all over the world. In recent times, there have been three large waves of immigration: Sephardic Jews, Haitians and Indochinese, plus significant numbers from Lebanon, North and West Africa and the French Caribbean islands.

This Francophone diversity is particularly evident in Quebec, especially in Montreal. However, it is also present in the major urban centres of Ontario, the province that receives by far the most immigrants in Canada.

Although primarily attracted by Ontario's economic prosperity, Francophone immigrants have been pleased to find French-speaking communities in Ontario, with which they can readily identify.

These new arrivals have actively contributed to the rise of La Francophonie in Canada. For instance, people from Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Rwanda, Haiti and Lebanon have all formed dynamic Francophone communities. In cities like Toronto and Ottawa, the arrival of French-speaking immigrants has resulted in the opening of new French-language schools or prevented the closure of others threatened by a declining birthrate.

Regardless of the era, motive or time of year, emigration is an act of faith – faith in a better future, faith in the individual and his or her ability to integrate into a new group and in the group's ability to facilitate that integration. ■

Nuits d'Afrique

In mid-July, every year since 1987, Montreal turns into a different metropolis when the "frenetic beat, amazing dances and exotic costumes" of the *Nuits d'Afrique* festival take over the city.

On a continent where the sounds of American music are a familiar feature of everyday life, the festival is like a window on the rest of the world – letting in music by performers from Africa, the Caribbean, South America, Europe and Canada itself. Particularly striking is the contribution of African musicians who increasingly "steal the show" wherever they play.

Thousands of people of many different origins come from all parts of Quebec and other Canadian provinces to take part in this cultural bonanza: attendance has grown from 10,000 at the first festival in 1987 to over 100.000 today.

Nuits d'Afrique is very much the work of one person – Lamine Touri. Born in Guinea, he came to Canada in the early 1980s and is the festival's president-founder. In the words of fellow musician Abidé Makilouwè Grace Assouma: "Lamine Touri adds an important new element to the Canadian mosaic – the contribution of African culture." ■

Juliette Powell

With a degree in Finance and Administration and a many-sided career as journalist, star host at MusiquePlus and producer at MuchMusic, Juliette Powell "wears a lot of hats" for one person, especially since she is only 28 years old. But the young star still has many other plans.

Although widely celebrated in her own right, she modestly mentions that her most beautiful memory is her meeting with Nelson Mandela as just one of the thousands of Canadian youth who came to welcome the "Great Man" during his visit to Toronto in 1998.

"While I was growing up, I came to understand that French would open doors for me both in Canada and abroad," she says. "I've managed to do a lot in my life just because I'm bilingual." ■

Jimmy Abud

Jimmy Abud and his family feel right at home in New Brunswick. The grandson of Lebanese immigrants, Jimmy Abud was born, grew up and went to school, in Acadia. He is now in business there and is vice-president of the New Brunswick Economic Council.

By the way, he also speaks with an Acadian accent!

As a 53-year-old businessman, Jimmy Abud is aware of both his individual social responsibilities and the need for mutual assistance and regional cooperation. In his determined and persistent fashion, he is trying to convince his fellow business people in Restigouche county to sign a "social contract" that could result in the creation of a thousand new jobs. ■

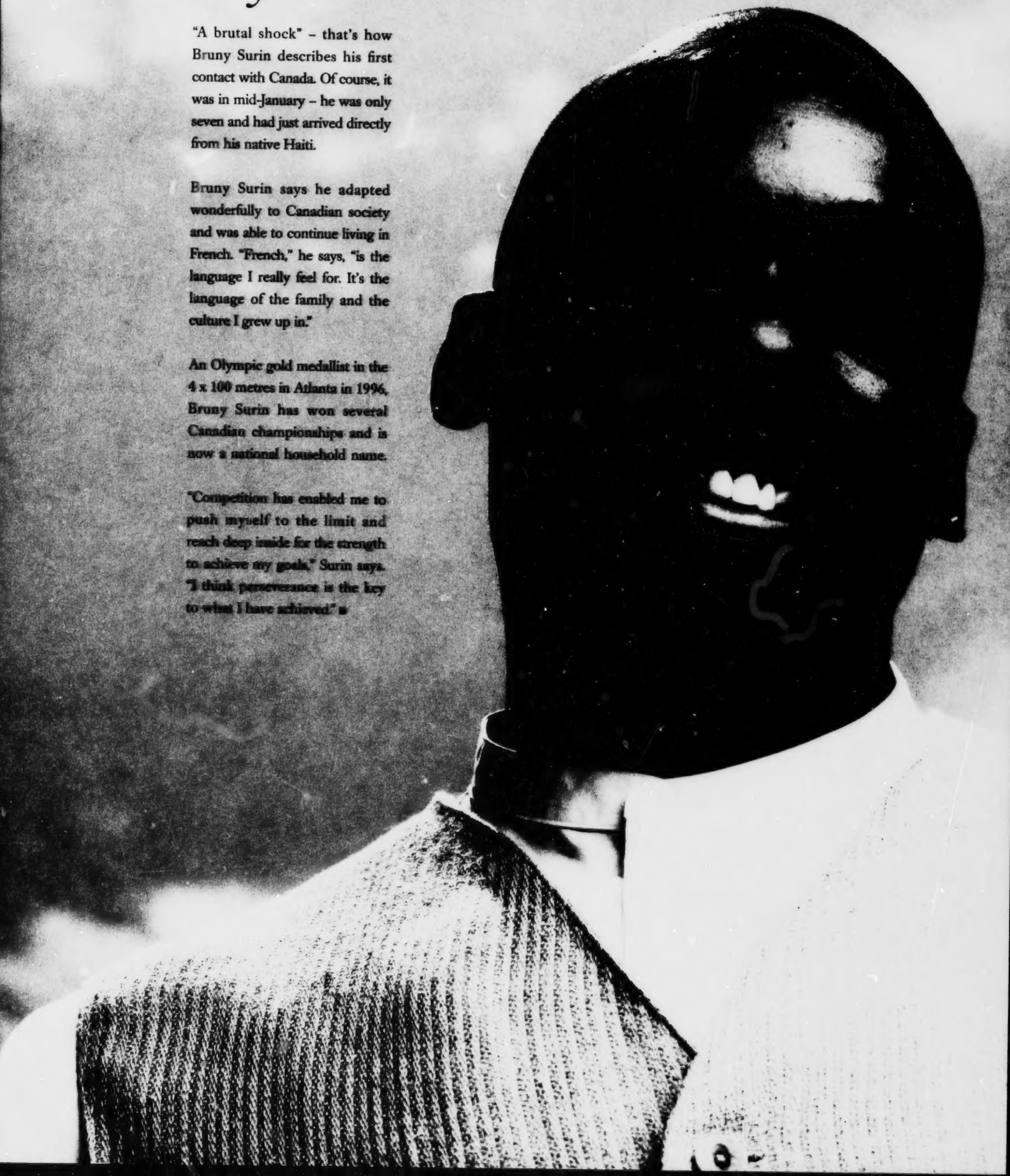
Bruny Surin

"A brutal shock" – that's how Bruny Surin describes his first contact with Canada. Of course, it was in mid-January – he was only seven and had just arrived directly from his native Haiti.

Bruny Surin says he adapted wonderfully to Canadian society and was able to continue living in French. "French," he says, "is the language I really feel for. It's the language of the family and the culture I grew up in."

An Olympic gold medallist in the 4 x 100 metres in Atlanta in 1996, Bruny Surin has won several Canadian championships and is now a national household name.

"Competition has enabled me to push myself to the limit and reach deep inside for the strength to achieve my goals," Surin says. "I think perseverance is the key to what I have achieved." ■



Dubmatique

Let's face it – French-speaking Canada used to be a bit behind the times when it came to *rap* music and *hip-hop*. Sure, Francophones could listen to it in English, but could they compose it themselves?

Then, in 1992, along came Dubmatique. This was a group consisting of an Algerian from Montreal, a Senegalese from Paris and a Cameroonian from Dakar. With their arrival, French *rap* and *hip-hop* started to take off in Canada.

The names of the group members are Disoul, O. TMC and Dj Choice. "French is our mother tongue," they say. "So, we are proud to rap in French." Dubmatique lyrics are very different from the gangsta rap that is popular in the United States and criticized for promoting violence. On the contrary, many of Dubmatique's compositions sound like poetry and even promote family values. The group is aware of its leadership role and speaks out on behalf of a Canadian awareness campaign against racial discrimination. ■

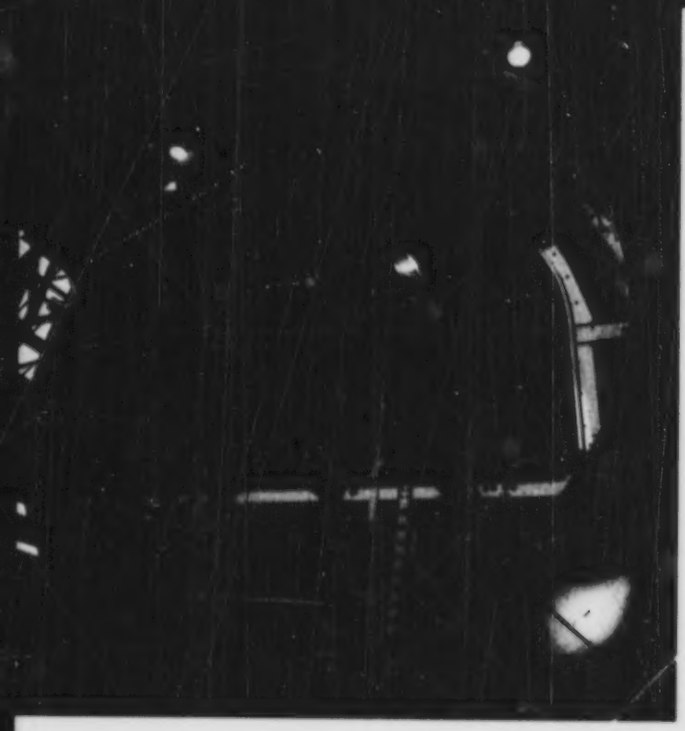
Catherine Mensour

"I'm living proof that bilingualism works," says Catherine Mensour, director of the Mensour Agency in Ottawa. Since 1985, she has been guiding the careers of some sixty artists, actors, authors, theatre professionals and television personalities. Approximately half her clients are Francophone, with most coming from Ontario.

"When I started, there was only one agency in town. Francophone artists needed agents to represent them properly and I had a very good knowledge of the Francophone artistic community," she explains.

Catherine Mensour points out that her parents do not speak French. "But my mother insisted I learn French," she says, "because she found French culture to be warm and open." ■

Science and technology in French



On June 5, 1999, Canadian astronaut Julie Payette returned from a 10-day space trip on board the space shuttle, *Discovery*.

The young Montrealer had just added another exploit to a rich Francophone tradition of excellence and innovation in science and technology – a tradition started by people like Armand Frappier, J. Armand Bombardier and Brother Marie-Victorin and carried on by many others.

The tremendous scientific progress that spanned the period between the two World Wars began with microbiologist Armand Frappier. After some time in the United States and at the Institut Pasteur in Paris, he returned home to found two important medical institutions: the Institut de microbiologie et d'hygiène de Montréal that later became the Institut Armand-Frappier and the first French-language school of hygiene in the world at the Université de Montréal. These institutions now play a leading role on the world scene, particularly in the fight against tuberculosis and leukaemia.

While Frappier was discovering new ways to overcome disease, another young genius was looking for ways to conquer the terrible Canadian winter. J. Armand Bombardier was dreaming of a vehicle to get the better of the huge, frozen, snow-covered fields.

In 1937, after several years' work, he succeeded in putting a tracked all-terrain vehicle on the market. The vehicle became an essential tool in developing the Canadian North and revolutionized military transport systems in northern countries.

The "Bombardier" was the forerunner of the *Ski-Doo®*, the first true snowmobile and an invention that has permanently changed the way we move around in winter. Its enormous success led to the emergence of Bombardier Inc. as one of Canada's largest corporations with business activities around the world.

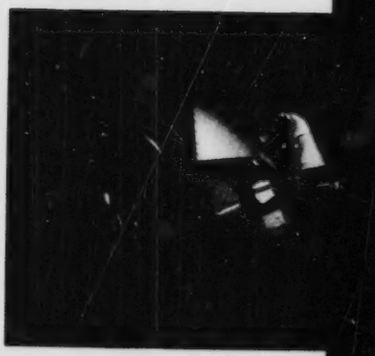
A contemporary of Frappier's and Bombardier's, Brother Marie-Victorin of the Christian Brothers devoted himself to teaching "scientific culture" in the hope of rallying all Canada's Francophones to his cause.

Brother Marie-Victorin created the Institut de botanique and the Jardin botanique in Montreal and founded other scientific organizations such as the Association canadienne-française pour l'avancement des sciences and the Société canadienne d'histoire naturelle. But his most important legacy to science and his fellow citizens is his masterpiece, *Flore laurentienne*, still the indispensable reference work on the subject.

In terms of scientific and technological achievement, the second half of the 20th century has been marked by major advances in engineering, advanced technology and the new information and communication technologies.

It has been an era of enormous dams and huge hydro power stations. These gigantic projects are proof of the exceptional capabilities acquired in recent decades.

In a parallel development, the aerospace sector progresses at an increasingly fast pace. The Canadair company has designed Challenger, a private jet that has become the symbol of Canadian success in this field and only gets better with each successive model.



On the threshold of the millennium, Canadian Francophones have not only learned how to master the new technologies, they have also demonstrated their capacity for innovation. Good examples of this are the Cité du multimédia in Montreal and the many other Francophone companies, mostly run by young people, that dominate the Canadian and other North American markets. ■

Francophones and scientific *discovery*

There are thousands of Canadian Francophone researchers striving to improve the general well-being of humanity. Often working behind the scenes in research laboratories and universities, they poke, touch, probe, question, deduce, think and, often, make discoveries.

Here are a few examples:

- 3TC™, the most commonly prescribed AIDS medication in Canada and the United States, was developed by Dr. Bernard Belleau. Scientists believe this is the most important scientific discovery in Canada since insulin in 1921.

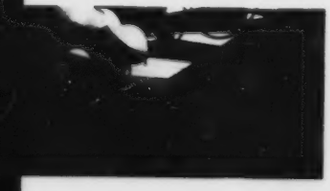
- A hormonal treatment against prostate cancer that has been successfully used throughout the world was developed by Dr. Fernand Labrie, head of the physiology department at Université Laval.

- The international scientific community is also watching very closely the work of another famous Canadian endocrinologist, Dr. Michel Chrétien, director of the Institut de recherches cliniques de Montréal. The "hormonal precursor" theory that he developed should have important implications for our understanding of brain chemistry, cancer, arterial sclerosis and AIDS.

- Chemist Pierre Deslongchamps of the Université de Sherbrooke is well known as one of the leading researchers in the world in the field of organic synthesis.

Other Francophone researchers have made a name for themselves through their passionate support of certain causes. Dr. Gustave Gingras, for example, is known as the "ambassador for the disabled." He founded the Institut de réadaptation de Montréal and, in conjunction with the Red Cross, helped set up similar centres in Morocco, Venezuela and Vietnam.

Certainly, Francophone scientists have come a long way since 1645 when François Gendron, a doctor at the Sainte-Marie Among the Hurons Mission used calcium deposits collected at the foot of Niagara Falls to make an ionized product to treat breast cancer. ■



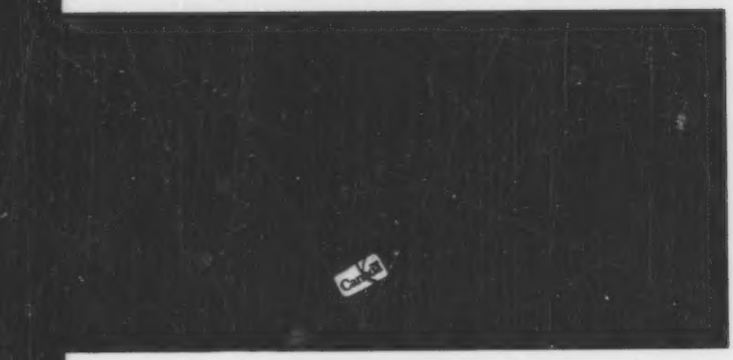
Fr@ncophones are well *connected!*

Francophone Internet experts in Canada have surprised their European counterparts and their own English-speaking neighbours by their strong presence on the World Wide Web. Canadians have the highest Internet hookup rate in the French-speaking world and they're showing it! More than 30 per cent of French-language sites on the Web are Canadian.

Several of these sites, such as the *Toile du Québec* directory site and the online magazine, *Branchez-vous!*, already have a well-established reputation. Canadian Web sites, especially those showcasing organizations such as Radio-Canada, TFO (the French-language educational channel in Ontario), the Musée de la Civilisation du Québec and the Centre international pour le développement de l'inforoute en français in New Brunswick, dominate Web page competitions. All these sites have won awards for site design and content.

Governments at both the federal and provincial levels are taking all kinds of steps to make Canada the most "connected" country in the world. They are investing in a sector that is showing a good "return", since companies like Softimage, Portage Technologies, Momentum and Intellia, either individually or in partnership, are developing their own expertise in the new information and communication technologies. These companies are reinventing the whole way of doing, producing, entertaining and interconnecting.

Eureka, you might say! Well, there is a site by this name and it can help you find almost everything that exists in the French-language press. ■



Canadians in *space*

Just when Julie Payette was returning from a 10-day trip into space in June 1999, Marc Garneau, the first Canadian to go into space, was getting ready for his third voyage.

Canadians have done well in space exploration and at the *Johnson Space Center* in Houston, Texas, where Julie Payette, Marc Garneau and half a dozen other Canadians train.

Canada is a partner in the most ambitious scientific project ever undertaken: the international space station. Canada is responsible for designing and managing the robotic system used to repair and maintain the station, as well as assembling its components.

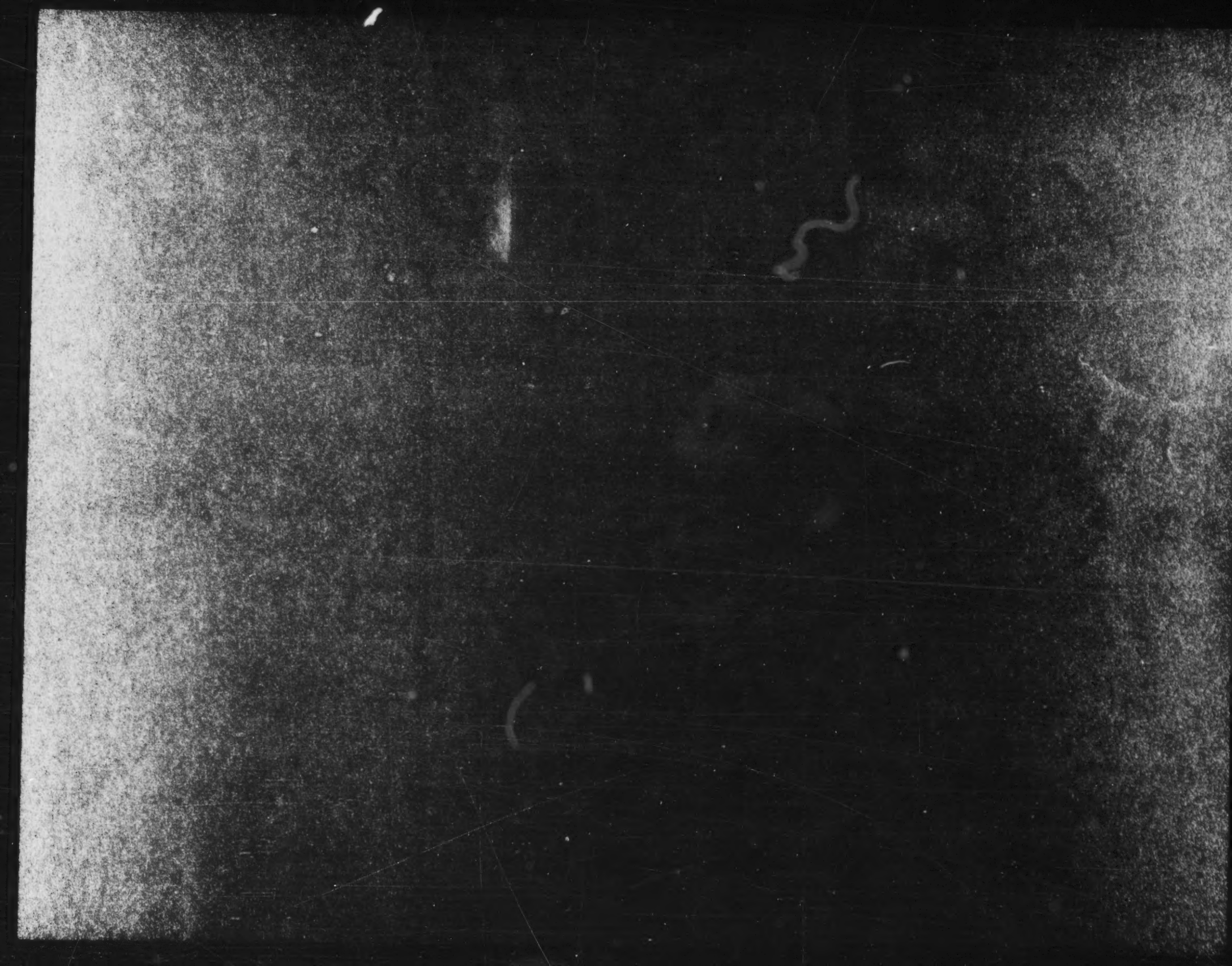
Julie Payette's mission, in her maiden voyage in space, was to repair defective electrical circuits in the station – using the Canadarm, of course.

Canada has been in space since 1962 when its first satellite, Alouette I, was put into orbit. The satellite was used to do scientific research on the ionosphere, the upper atmospheric region around the Earth.

Ten years later, after the creation of Telesat Canada and the launching of Anik A-1, Canada became a pioneer in the use of satellites to relay commercial signals. Anik A-2 and Anik A-3 followed in 1973 and 1975 respectively. These geostationary satellites allow French-language television broadcasts to be relayed all over the country, including the Far North.

Because of its huge network of private and public satellites, including the most recent satellite, Radarsat, Canada is a world leader in global communications. The launch of Radarsat in 1995 opened a new era in the field of remote sensing because of its ability to transmit and receive signals through cloud cover.

Canada's involvement in space has an important economic impact with a total national workforce of around 5,000, mostly based at Canadian Space Agency headquarters in Saint-Hubert, Quebec. The space agency has an annual income of $1 billion, most of which comes from exporting goods and services. In addition, another 250 public and private organizations are involved in the national space program. ■



Education

in French

Laura
MATHILDE

From Monseigneur Laval's Petit Séminaire in Quebec, which had fifteen young Canadian and Huron students in 1668, to today's virtual university connecting tens of thousands of young Francophones with the entire world, French-language schools in Canada have helped the language of Molière take root and flourish in North American soil.

Today, almost two million full-time and part-time students attend Francophone elementary, secondary, college-level or university-level educational institutions in Canada, mostly in Quebec.

Most provinces and territories offer pre-school and kindergarten programs in French for the very young. More than a million and a half students in Canada receive their education in French in 3,000 elementary and secondary schools.

For many years, religious orders established and ran many of these schools. For a long time in Quebec, they took full responsibility for educating the entire population, while in the other provinces they were often the only option for an education in French.

Nowadays, there is a complete network of colleges and universities offering a wide range of higher education programs in French. These programs attract not only Canadian students, but also large numbers of foreign students. The college network is oriented toward the needs of business and industry and helps students obtain a more technical education covering both traditional and high-tech fields.

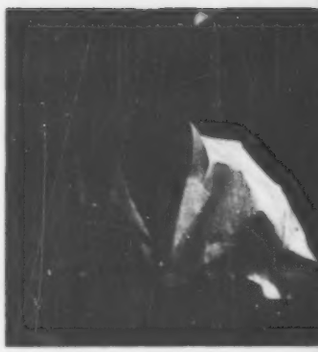
As the only province with a Francophone majority, Quebec has created its own distinctive higher education system. This consists of 43 collèges d'enseignement général et professionnel (CEGEPs), where technical, professional and pre-university programs are offered in the same institution. Ten universities, two research institutes and three specialized *grandes écoles* complete the system.

For their part, Acadia and Ontario have half a dozen French-language colleges with a total enrolment of almost 10,000 students. The most important of these are La Cité collégiale in Ottawa and the Collège de l'Acadie in the Maritimes.

In Acadia, two universities offer complete programs in French: Université Sainte-Anne in Nova Scotia and the Université de Moncton in New Brunswick. In other provinces, Bachelor's, Master's and Ph.D. degrees are offered in French by many institutions such as Laurentian University in Sudbury, Faculté Saint-Jean in Edmonton, Collège universitaire Saint-Boniface in Winnipeg, Saint Paul University and the Dominican College in Ottawa. Ottawa also has the University of Ottawa, North America's largest bilingual university.

In all, more than 200,000 full- or part-time students are enrolled in French-language university programs in Canada.

The French-language education system in Canada is recognized as one of the best in the world and Canadian Francophones are among the most educated people on earth. ■



In 1663, Monseigneur Laval, the first Bishop of New France, founded the Séminaire de Québec. In 1852, this became Université Laval after Queen Victoria authorized its royal charter.

Université Laval represents the beginnings of French-language higher education on the North American continent. Generations of Francophones went there to complete their education with a distinguished faculty, alongside the many Anglophones, mostly from other Canadian provinces, enrolled to improve their knowledge of French.

What Jean Chrétien, Lucien Bouchard and Brian Mulroney have in common is that they studied there. Université Laval's international reputation and its various international cooperation programs attract students from all over the French-speaking world. In the fall of 1998, total enrolment was close to 36,000. ■

A *French-language* university in America

The *grandes écoles*

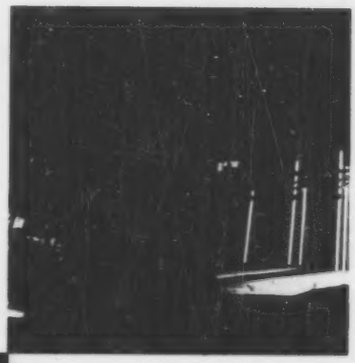
Thanks to the high standards of their teaching institutions, Canada's Francophones have made their mark in many different fields.

The École polytechnique de Montréal, for example, was founded in 1873 to provide advanced technical education to Francophones. Over the years, the school has become the spearhead of Francophone Canada's technical acumen.

The École des hautes études commerciales de Montréal, founded in 1907, has made a great contribution to Francophone Canada's involvement in the world of business, traditionally considered the preserve of English-speaking Canada.

The first agricultural school in North America was founded in 1858 at La Pocatière in Quebec. Today, this school, like Collège d'Alfred in Ontario, receives students from all over the world.

On the cultural front, graduates of the National Theatre School of Canada in Montreal have been contributing to the vitality of French-language theatre since 1960. In addition, two major conservatories of music were also established in Montreal (1943) and Quebec (1944), under Wilfred Pelletier's direction. ■



Educational challenges in Canada

Canada's impressive land mass is undoubtedly one of the country's most remarkable features. On the other hand, this becomes a major obstacle for Francophone teachers in Canada because of the enormous distances that sometimes separate them from their students. They have responded by creating an ingenious distance education network that meets both student needs and higher education requirements.

Two of the most technically advanced centres are Collège de l'Acadie in Nova Scotia and Collège Boréal in Northern Ontario. Both these institutions link the various regions they serve to a main campus through new modes of communication.

Collège Boréal, for example, is linked to students on seven campuses. It is the first college in Canada to provide each student with a laptop computer giving them access to their marks, college faculty and the Internet.

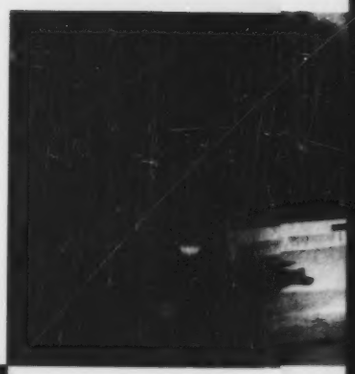
The computer is well on the way to becoming a learning tool as important as ink, paper and blackboard were in the past. ■

French *immersion*

If it is true that a language's vitality can be judged by the number of people learning it, Canada's Francophones have good reason to be happy: two million non-Francophone Canadian schoolchildren are enrolled in elementary and secondary French courses.

What is more, 320,000 of these children take part in immersion programs, a teaching system developed right here in Canada. This is 10 times more than 20 years ago. These students not only study French, they study subjects like history, geography and mathematics *in* French.

Many educational experts consider that Canadian immersion programs represent the greatest success in second-language teaching in recent years. This has been confirmed by interest from abroad that has resulted in the model being adopted in Australia, Spain, the United States, Finland, Hong Kong, New Zealand and Singapore. ■



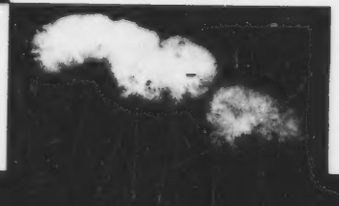
Rimouski, *a maritime centre*

The lower St. Lawrence district of Quebec has built up a solid reputation in maritime teaching and research.

The Institut maritime du Québec, founded in 1944, is the most important maritime training centre in Canada. It provides internationally renowned training in naval architecture, navigation, marine mechanical engineering, diving and transportation logistics.

Another important institution in the region is the Maurice Lamontage Institute in Mont-Joli, a marine sciences research centre that focuses on resource conservation, environmental protection and naval safety.

These two distinguished institutions of maritime expertise continue to ensure that Francophones make a major contribution to world maritime activity. ■



Paul et *Suzanne*

One of the biggest challenges facing Francophones in minority situations is how to transmit French language and culture to their children. The situation becomes all the more difficult when one of the two parents is Anglophone.

In Western Canada, a solution has been found with the creation of a unique teaching tool called the *Paul et Suzanne* kit. This tool is designed to promote French in a way that allows both the Anglophone and the Francophone parent to take part in their children's French-language learning.

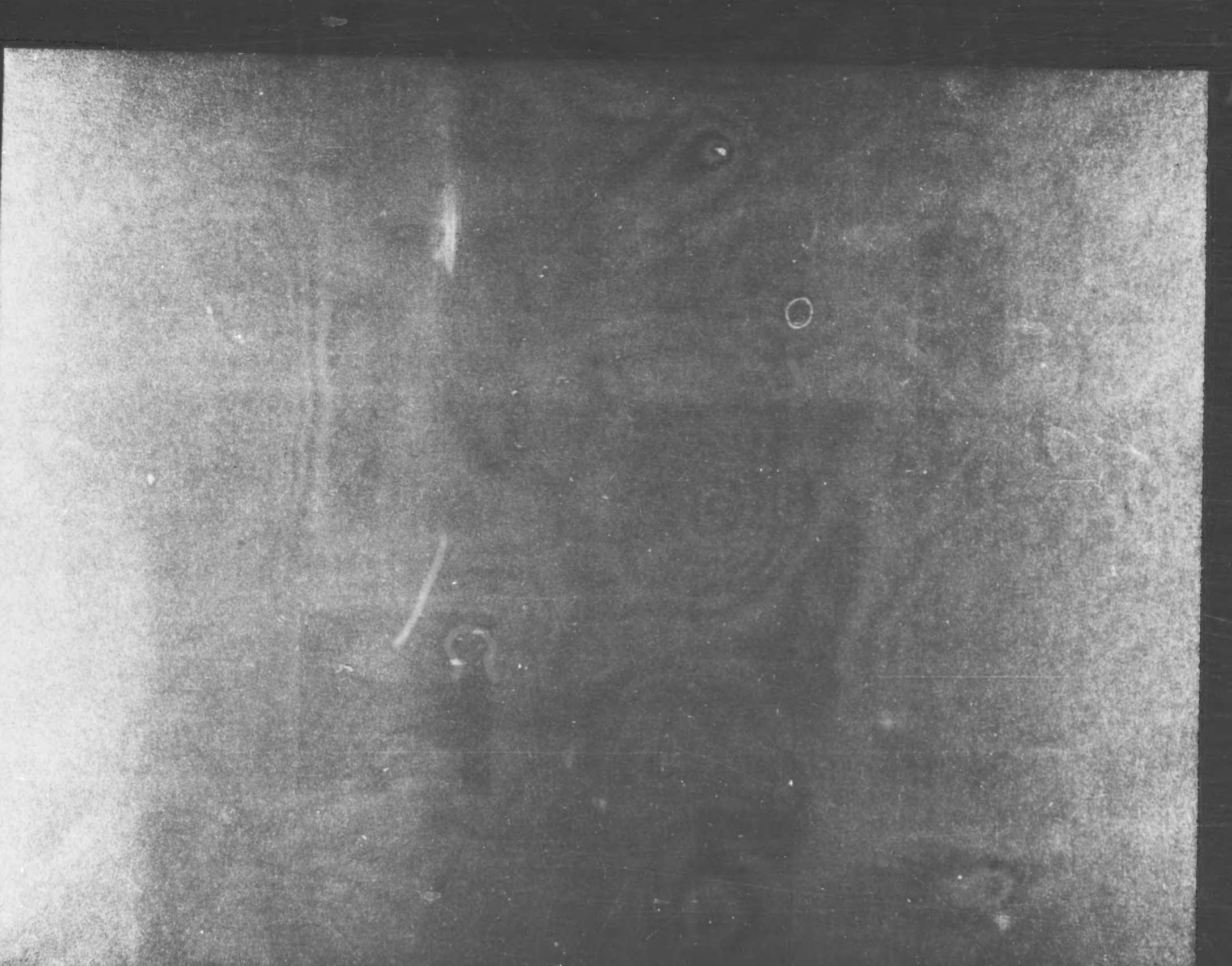
Developed in Manitoba in 1992, the *Paul et Suzanne* kit quickly became popular in neighbouring provinces. ■

De La Salle high school

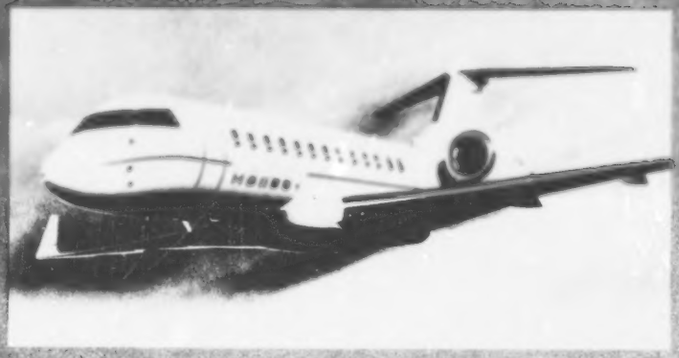
Each year, De La Salle, an internationally famous French-language high school in Ottawa, helps many young Francophones get their start in one or more of the artistic disciplines.

The De La Salle centre for artistic excellence offers specialized training in visual arts, classical ballet, contemporary dance, creative and academic writing, instrumental music, singing and theatre.

"The centre has become an essential training ground for the next generations of artists," explains founder Jean-Claude Bergeron. The school has an impressive roster of graduates: for example, Nicola Currie is a violinist with the Baltimore Opera Orchestra; Noémie Godin-Vigneault has performed in several major productions, including Diva; Matthew Whelan is touring with Cirque du Soleil and Michèle Marier is with the Volksoper Opera in Vienna. ■

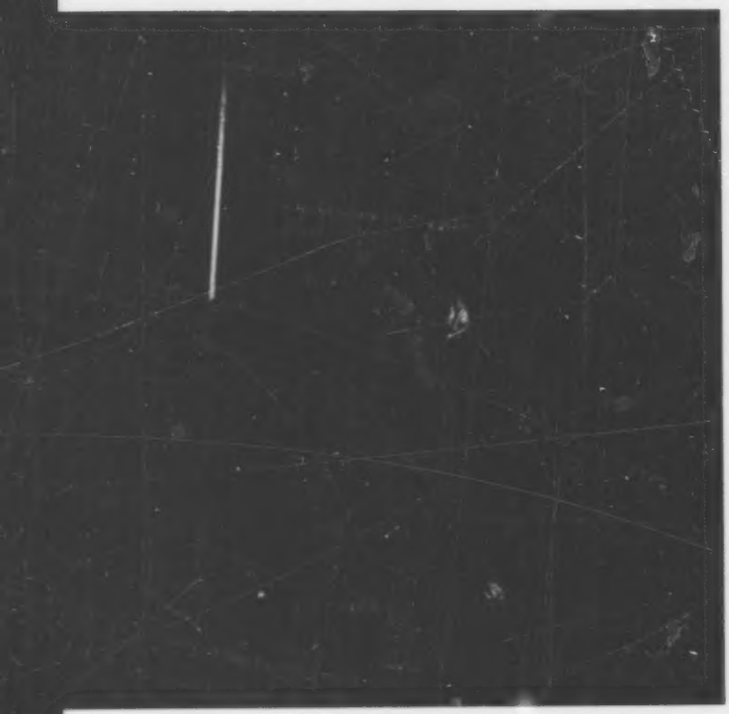


Doing *business* in French



There have always been Francophone entrepreneurs in Canada. Starting with the coureurs des bois and continuing through the cooperative movement, they have always been able to initiate business, manage, conduct transactions and assert themselves on the stock market and other financial markets.

Less than 40 years ago, in a predominantly Francophone Quebec, Francophones were under-represented in corporate management, even in Crown corporations. Today, because of the Quiet Revolution, the situation has been redressed, with Francophones now occupying approximately 80 per cent of these positions.



Charles Sirois

The arrival of a new generation of Francophone entrepreneurs in Quebec and elsewhere in the country has very clearly demonstrated Francophones' eagerness to take part in national economic life and meet global competitive challenges.

In fact, Francophones are seasoned business competitors. Like thousands of other entrepreneurs, most of them started off with nothing. By the sweat of their brow, they have built up small and medium-sized businesses, managed business empires and competed with the largest multinationals.

The largest companies controlled by Francophones are relatively young – as indeed are their managers in many cases. One notable example is Teleglobe, which has become a world leader in intercontinental telecommunications. Today, under Chairman and CEO Charles Sirois, it is the third largest owner of underwater fibre optic cable systems.

The Bombardier company is now the third largest manufacturer of civilian aircraft in the world. A little over ten years ago, it took over Canadair, a money-losing Crown corporation. Today, Bombardier, with 53,000 employees around the world and factories in 12 countries, earns 90 per cent of its revenues outside Canada. In 1998, the company's revenues totalled $11.5 billion.

Communications giant Quebecor owes its reputation to founder Pierre Péladeau, who made the company an industry leader in Quebec, Canada and the world with revenues of more than $8 billion. Pierre's son, Pierre-Karl, has just taken over the family business and is following in his father's footsteps. Quebecor has just bought Sun Media, one of the main newspaper chains in English-speaking Canada.

Pierre-Karl Péladeau

Another successful company is Power Corporation, a huge conglomerate that started in Montreal. Founder Paul Desmarais, who was only 24 when he launched the company in the early 1950s, is now a patriarchal figure in the business community.

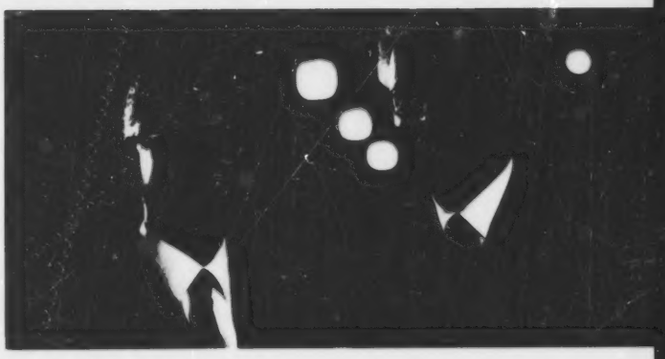
His two sons, Paul and André, are now in charge of Power Corp. Like Sirois at Teleglobe and Péladeau at Quebecor, the Desmarais brothers are under 45.

Although Teleglobe, Bombardier, Power and Quebecor do a large portion of their business abroad, these four huge companies remain strongly Canadian. Their example has inspired a whole generation of Francophone entrepreneurs who are now trying to break into foreign markets in various sectors.

They can be found stirring things up at companies such as: TecSult, Franco Nevada, SNC Lavalin, Métro Richelieu, Groupe Canam Manac, Groupe Chagnon, Groupe Coscient, Cossette Communication, Assomption Vie, Desjardins and Intellia.

In addition to these outstanding companies, there are tens of thousands of small and medium-sized Francophone businesses across Canada that are creating the vast majority of new jobs in sectors such as tourism, agri-food, fishing and services. In certain regions like Beauce, their resourcefulness, collaboration and sound strategies have produced real economic miracles.

Thus, it is not surprising that Francophone entrepreneurs today have become public heroes. ■



Paul and André Desmarais

Desjardins

More than any other financial institution, the Desjardins *caisse populaire* movement has supported the dreams and ambitions of an entire people, as well as the business plans of local, provincial, national and international companies.

Founded at the beginning of the century by Alphonse Desjardins, a House of Commons stenographer in Ottawa, the movement established *caisses* (credit-union-type institutions) in all locations that had a sufficiently large Francophone population – naturally in Quebec, but also in Acadia, Ontario, Manitoba and other areas.

As Alphonse Desjardins himself said: "Regardless of the short- or long-term consequences of the full development of these institutions, our people have the opportunity to create wealth with their help."

This is exactly what has happened. Today, Desjardins is recognized as the largest Francophone financial institution in Canada with assets of more than $70 billion. More than five million people do business there every year. ■

Antoine Paquin

Young tycoons

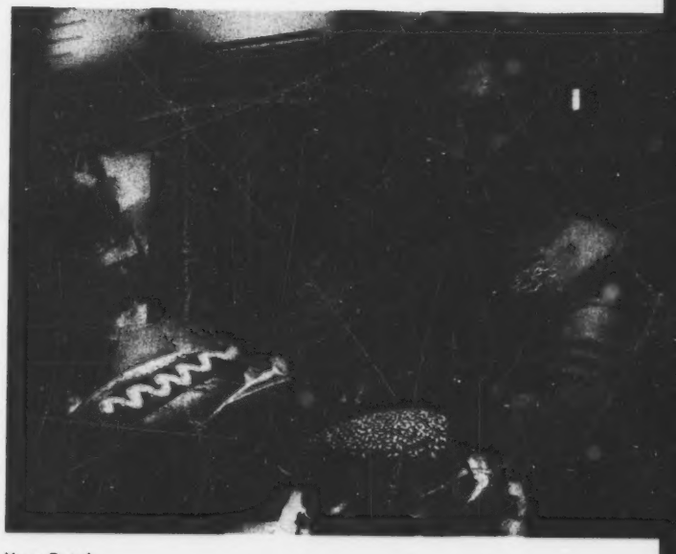
In 1997, at the tender age of 30, Antoine Paquin became a multi-millionaire when he sold Skystone Systems, his one-year-old high-speed data transmission company, for the astronomical sum of $89 million. But that was just the beginning. He has just joined Philsar Electronics as President and Chief Executive Officer.

Alexandre Taillefer

Alexandre Taillefer of Montreal is another business adventurer. Only 26, he heads up Intellia, a leader in the field of information technology with annual sales of over $20 million.

"Ten years ago," he says, "everybody wanted to write a novel or make a film. Now, everyone wants to start a business. My generation has got rid of the inferiority complex that plagued our elders."

Yves Potvin is another tycoon with the same entrepreneurial spirit and love of adventure. After falling in love with Vancouver during a bike tour across Canada, the young chef settled there and launched his brand of fast-food vegetarian products in 1995. His company now has 180 employees and does business all over Canada, as well as in the United States and Great Britain. ■



Yves Potvin

Women in *business*

"You need tolerance to change the world, but you need power, first of all." So says Micheline Charest, the Chief Executive Officer of Cinar, a Montreal television production company.

An increasing number of women share this view and have taken over the reins of power in business. With her production track record of 34 original television series for broadcast in more than 100 countries since 1976, that's exactly what Micheline Charest has done.

Micheline Charest

Lise Watier

Lise Watier is another example of a successful businesswoman. Rated one of the country's 10 most successful entrepreneurs of the 1980s, she has founded a business empire based on a line of more than 300 cosmetic products exported all over the world – the United States, France, the Middle East and Asia. "I didn't listen to anyone. I did it all on my own," she once said.

Similarly, Franco-Ontarian Denise Meehan did not wait for help from anyone to build her business empire. She started her first fast-food outlet in 1984 and has just opened her twentieth. She explains her success this way: "Employee training and customer service is what we prefer to invest in." ■

Denise Meehan

Bursting

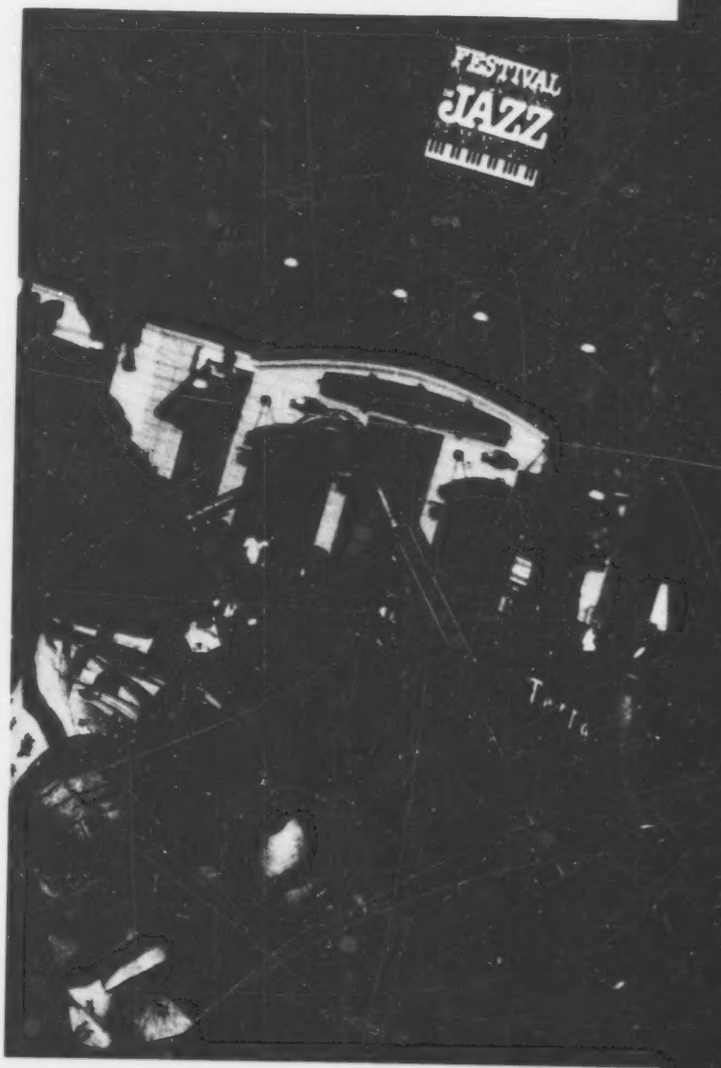
with creativity

Canada owes a good deal of its international reputation to its artists.

In fact, some of our best ambassadors are our artists, like Céline Dion, Diane Dufresne, Daniel Lavoie, Luc Plamondon and Gilles Vigneault, who are shining stars in the pantheon of song both here and around the world.

The Cirque du Soleil has reinvented the artform of the circus. Michel Tremblay has created the most beautiful characters in contemporary theatre. The powerful writing of Herménégilde Chiasson, Daniel Poliquin and Gabrielle Roy have put their respective provinces of New Brunswick, Ontario and Manitoba "on the literary map." And Joe Fafard, in his little Saskatchewan village, has infused a special something into his bronze cow sculptures that reconciles urban and country life. These are just some of the magnificent achievements of our artists.

Our artists enrich the communities where they were born and leave them a small part of eternity in legacy. These are the people who make La Francophonie in Canada resonate and reverberate. When the different echoes come together, they jointly celebrate what distinguishes us and what unites us.



Nonetheless, on the strength of their profoundly Canadian roots, our artists still aspire to create works that have universal appeal.

Montreal has played a leading role in providing an expressive outlet for La Francophonie in Canada and supporting its development. Any artist wanting to develop an international career simply must take the Montreal route. It is a world centre of culture and a great inspiration for most of our artists.

The list of artists choosing to live there is very long – Michel Côté, Jean-Marc Dalpé, Lara Fabian, Brigitte Haentjens, Antonine Maillet, Robert Paquette, Kevin Parent, Marie-Jo Thério and Serge Patrice Thibodeau to name just a few. Montreal encourages its artists to emulate the best both in Canada and the rest of the Francophone world.

Montreal owes its "party atmosphere" to all the festivals held there, such as the Montreal Jazz Festival, Just for Laughs, Nuits d'Afrique, FrancoFolies de Montréal and Coup de Cœur francophone, a festival that is also held in all the other Canadian provinces.

In fact, the festival idea is becoming increasingly popular all across the country, as people are attracted to the festive spirit in an atmosphere of togetherness and fun.

Other noteworthy Francophone festivals in Canada include: Festival des Voyageurs in St. Boniface, Manitoba; Festival d'Été in Quebec City; Superfrancofête in Moncton; Festival franco-ontarien in Ottawa; Festival Chant'Ouest in Edmonton and Nuit sur l'étang in Sudbury.

The cultural vitality of Canada's Francophones is only matched by their urge to sing, write, act and express themselves in French. They do it so well they have made themselves heard around the world. ■

Born in Montreal in 1923, Jean-Paul Riopelle is the Canadian artist who has had the most important individual and group exhibitions around the world. The man who was friends with Matisse, André Breton, Samuel Beckett, Giacometti and Calder now lives with the snow geese on the Montmagny Islands.

His works are noted for their explosive colours and their gigantic, monumental form. For Riopelle, colour is one of the structural elements that underlie the entire painting. Is he an abstract painter? This is what he has to say on the subject: "To abstract means to remove, isolate and separate. I, on the other hand, seek to add, bring together and link." ■

Jean-Paul RIOPELLE

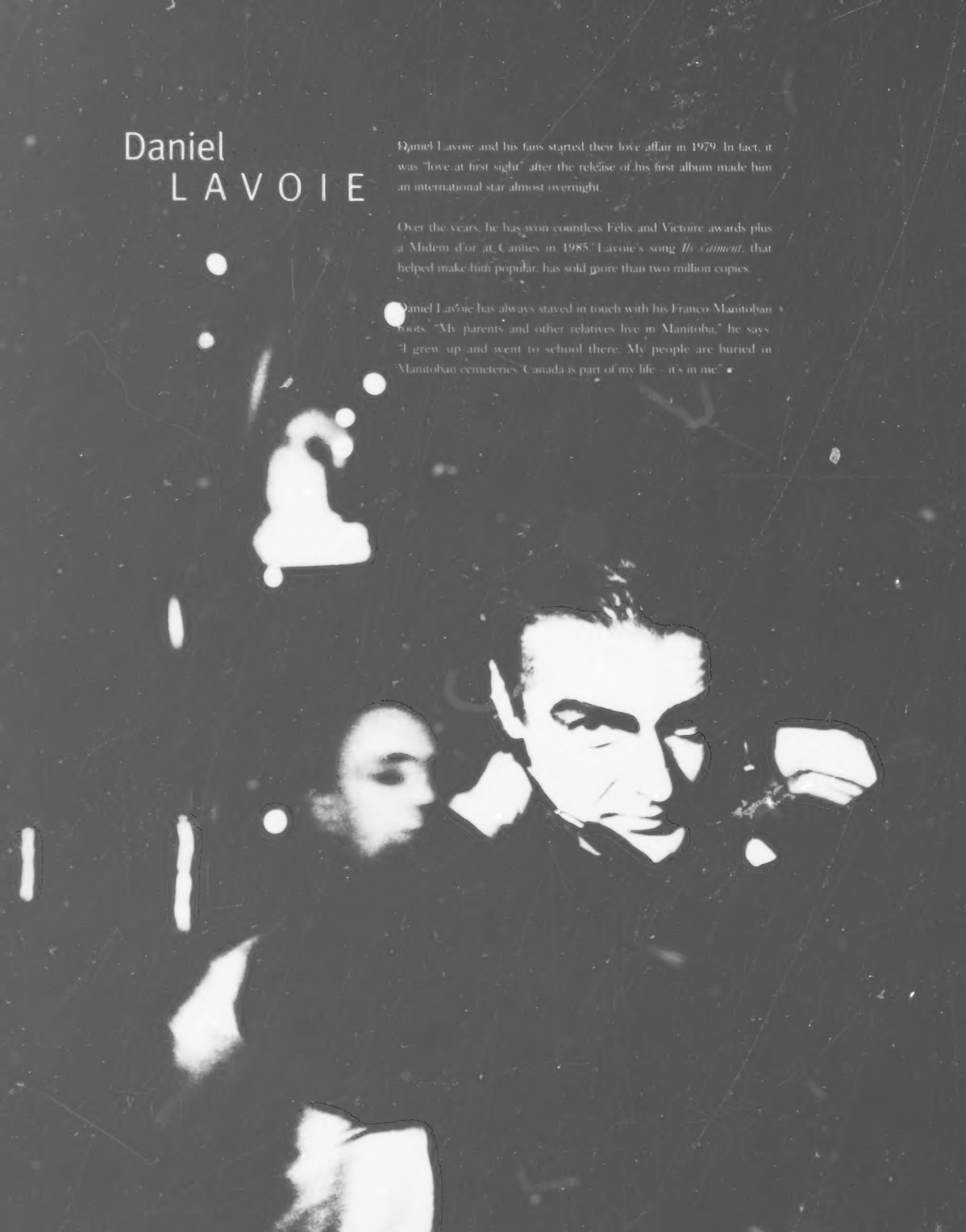
Brigitte HAENTJENS

Brigitte Haentjens is a shining light of Franco-Ontarian theatre.

Thanks to her, the Théâtre du Nouvel-Ontario in Sudbury has experienced its most glorious moments. Her production of Jean-Marc Dalpé's Governor General's Award-winning play, *Le Chien*, was a crowning moment in the history of Canadian French-language theatre. Brigitte Haentjens also co-wrote *La parole et la Loi* (Théâtre d'la Corvée) and *Hawkesbury Blues* (Théâtre de la Vieille 17). In addition, she has directed many artistic events ranging from theatre and poetry to music and singing. She has been living in Montreal for a number of years.

When the subject of her roots is mentioned, she insists: "While I don't have a drop of Franco-Ontarian blood in my veins, I am Franco-Ontarian in my soul." ■

Daniel LAVOIE



Daniel Lavoie and his fans started their love affair in 1979. In fact, it was "love at first sight" after the release of his first album made him an international star almost overnight.

Over the years, he has won countless Félix and Victoire awards plus a Midem d'or at Cannes in 1985. Lavoie's song *Ils s'aiment*, that helped make him popular, has sold more than two million copies.

Daniel Lavoie has always stayed in touch with his Franco-Manitoban roots. "My parents and other relatives live in Manitoba," he says. "I grew up and went to school there. My people are buried in Manitoban cemeteries. Canada is part of my life – it's in me." ■

Daniel POLIQUIN

Daniel Poliquin is the most famous Franco-Ontarian author on the contemporary scene. The power of his writing particularly came through in his novel, *Obomsawin.* With the huge success of *L'écureuil noir* in 1994, he became the most widely-read Franco-Ontarian author in Canada.

In 1998, Daniel Poliquin received the Trillium Book Award for his novel, *L'Homme de paille.* Set in 18th-century Quebec City, this historical novel begins like this:

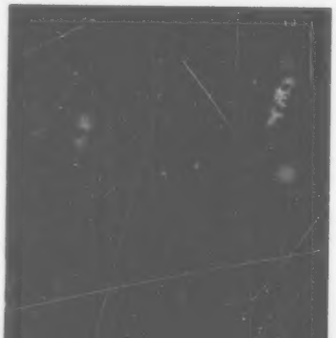
"It was a day when you could say the sun was white with cold.
With his round, broad-rimmed hat, face pale with hunger, full Pierrot costume and made-to-order smile, the little man was repeatedly shouting out his spiel: 'Come closer, Ladies and Gentlemen, come closer! La Double Inconstance *is playing tonight at the Governor of New France's palace!' "* ■

Brasse-CAMARADE

The group Brasse-Camarade consists of two brothers – Pierre and François Lamoureux. Their roots are in French Ontario, but since they started in 1991, their brand of catchy rock has spread to four continents.

Their message to young people: rock has a language and it's French! Sometimes it's also Portuguese. They've even released an album in Portuguese for their new fans in Brazil and Portugal.

"We get our inspiration from blending our reality with what we meet abroad in Europe, Brazil or Asia," remarks Pierre Lamoureux. ■



François GIRARD

"I feel like a thief," joked François Girard after the Jutra awards on March 7, 1999: his film, *The Red Violin*, had just won nine awards, including those for best film and best director.

His many fans, however, don't share his modesty. After all, didn't his full-length film, *Thirty-Two Short Films About Glenn Gould*, win four Genie awards in 1993? And didn't *Le Dortoir* deserve its Fipa d'or at Cannes in 1991?

Hailing from Saint-Félicien on Lac-Saint-Jean, the filmmaker is only 36 – so it just goes to show that you don't have to be old to be good!

Le Soleil wrote this about his latest film: "It was perhaps a bit of a crazy idea to try and make this film, but Girard has gone about it wholeheartedly. *The Red Violin* is a lucid look at a tricky subject. There's no doubt at all that it's the best film ever made by a Quebecer – or any other Canadian for that matter." ■

Marie-Jo THÉRIO

Although Marie-Jo Thério left her native Acadia at only 17, you can still hear Acadia in her singing.

In all her appearances in places like Montreal, Saint-Malo, La Rochelle and New Orleans, she always sings about Acadia. You should hear her powerful, bluesy voice as she sings numbers like *Moncton, Hôtel de ville* or *Petite Acadie*.

The Acadian native has come a long way since the Granby Festival, the Félix-Leclerc award at Montreal's FrancoFolies in 1996 and the Coup de Cœur francophone in 1997. And to think that her dazzling career has only just begun!

After winning the silver medal at the Games of La Francophonie in Madagascar, Marie-Jo Thério had this to say: "I'm going to let myself go forward, just as I am – with my doubts and my dreams, my rebelliousness and my vulnerability." ■

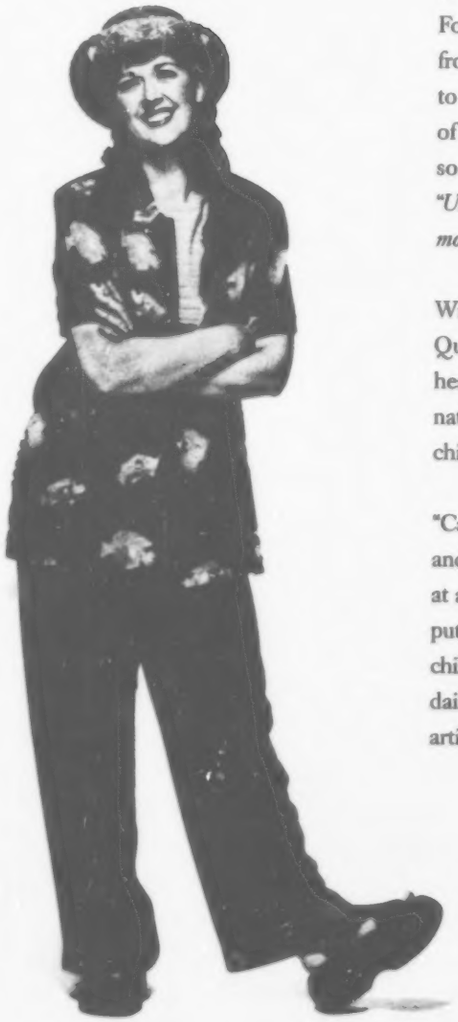
Louise LECAVALIER

Louise Lecavalier started dancing relatively late: she was already 16 when she began to practise. But what a dancer she has turned out to be! Louise Lecavalier has been the heart and soul of the most remarkable dance company in Canada, La La La Human Steps. There, they call her "kamikaze".

"I don't like half-measures," she confesses. "You need to give enormous amounts of yourself if you want to dance on stage. You can't perform only for yourself."

In 1985, she was the first Canadian to win a Bessie in New York for her dancing in *Businessman in the Process of Becoming an Angel.* In 1999, she also won the Chalmers Prize for Canadian artists making an outstanding contribution to their discipline. ■

Carmen CAMPAGNE



She has been called the "diva of day care" and "the Passe-Partout of the 1990s". She has even been called the "antidote to Nintendo".

A former member of the group Folle Avoine, this Francophone from Saskatchewan has managed to capture the minds and hearts of children across Canada with songs like *"La vache en Alaska"*, *"Un bon chocolat chaud"* and *"La moustache à papa"*.

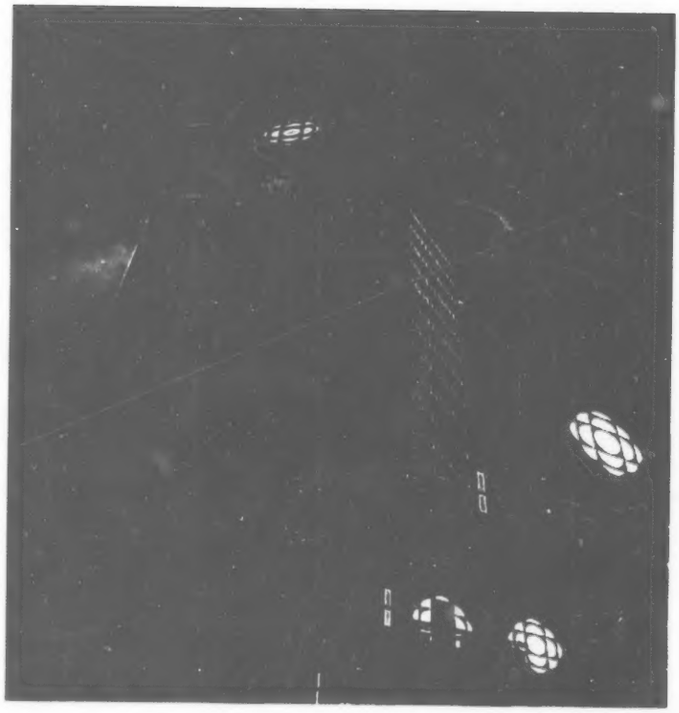
Winner of three Félix awards in Quebec, she recently won the hearts of the French who nominated her for a Victoire for best children's album.

"Carmen Campagne's voice, lyrics and musical arrangements are not at all cloying and, in fact, virtually put her in a class by herself as a children's singer," wrote the French daily, *Le Figaro*, during one of the artist's visits to Paris. ■

Three of Canada's longest-standing cultural organizations have made a great contribution to the advancement of Francophone artists in this country.

Since 1957, the Canada Council for the Arts' funding programs have helped thousands of artists and organizations from the entire artistic spectrum to perfect their skills and make their art accessible to all types of audiences, including Francophones in Canada and elsewhere in the world.

Since its creation in 1939, the National Film Board has produced more than 9,000 documentaries, children's films, animated films, feature-length and short films. These have not only won more than 3,000 international prizes but have also helped most Canadian filmmakers pursue a career.



Founded in 1936, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation has made quality French-language programming available to Francophones in all parts of the country, and has helped our artists develop and showcase their talents. ■

A global

presence

In international relations, Canada is mainly concerned with world peace, global economic development, protecting the environment and promoting cultural diversity.

Canada's involvement in La Francophonie is a great national asset – similar to its role in the Commonwealth and all the other major international forums such as the World Trade Organization, the Group of Eight top Western economic powers, the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Council and the Organization of American States.

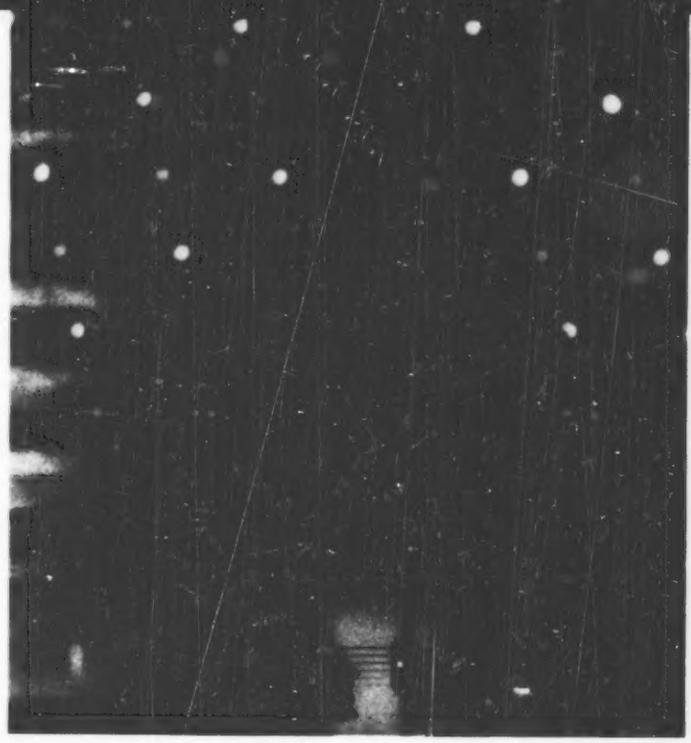
Canada provides assistance to developing countries through the Canadian International Development Agency. The Canadian government is also quick to respond to frequent appeals from the United Nations Organization and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to support their peacekeeping efforts.

In addition, Canada has significant commercial interests to promote on the international scene: 44 per cent of its Gross National Product currently comes from exports. This represents more than double the average for industrialized nations and is the highest percentage of all the G-8 countries.

For Canada, however, globalization touches on much more than just economics. For instance, in 1998, the Canadian government convened the first international meeting on cultural policy related to global cultural diversity.

Canada is proud of its French and British heritage and this has been further enriched by other national communities from all over the world. In fact, Canada was one of the founding members of the Agence de la francophonie in Niamey, Niger, in 1970.

Helped by an arrangement that allows both Quebec and New Brunswick to participate, Canada played a decisive role in the creation of the Sommet de la Francophonie. It was thus quite natural that the II^{e} Sommet was held in Quebec City in 1987 and that the eighth is set for Moncton in 1999.



Roch Voisine

In addition, Canada will host the 4th Games of La Francophonie to be held in Ottawa-Hull in 2001. More than 3,000 athletes and artists are expected to attend. The event itself is unique in combining sports and cultural competitions at the same time.

Félix Leclerc was the first Canadian artist to pave the way to France for succeeding generations of *chansonniers*. Nowadays, Francophone singers Céline Dion, born in the village of Charlemagne, Quebec, and Roch Voisine, from Edmundston, New Brunswick, are idolized throughout the world, and not only by Francophones. Another Quebecer, Luc Plamondon, has pulled off a major hit with his version of *Notre-Dame de Paris*, an interpretation of the Hunchback of Notre Dame that has helped a whole new generation of Francophones, in France and elsewhere, rediscover Victor Hugo.

Similarly, great Canadian painters have exported their breathtaking works to other countries, mainly to the "Old World" represented by Europe. The bright colours, energetic forms and bold lines of their paintings reflect the fresh, new vision of a young, forward-looking country.

French language and culture have indeed contributed to making Canada what it is today – a country proud of its roots, strong in the present and with a most promising future. ■

Luc Plamondon

Antonine *Maillet*

Thanks in large part to writer Antonine Maillet, Acadia is much better known to Francophones around the world. Her book, *Pélagie-la-Charette*, has found readers in all parts of the globe, and all Acadia was overjoyed when the book won her the prestigious Prix Goncourt.

Antonine Maillet has been awarded nearly all the Canadian distinctions it is possible for an author to receive. Among the several honours conferred on her by France is the rank of Officier des Arts et des Lettres.

At the first Acadian World Congress in 1994, Antonine Maillet said this about her native region: "Acadia needs to express the fact that it exists and that it can be, all at the same time, part of Canada, part of America and part of the international Francophonie. As a result, Acadia, like all the other distinct cultural communities on Earth, has its own distinct place on the world stage." ■

Robert *Lepage*

Is Robert Lepage a playwright, director or filmmaker? Let's see.

He won the Coup de Pouce award at the Avignon Festival in 1987 for his play *Vinci*. He has produced Shakespeare and directed at the Royal National Theatre in London and the Royal Dramatic Theatre in Stockholm. In 1998, his film *Nô* won the award for the best Canadian film at the Toronto Film Festival.

Thus, we can well understand that he is, in fact, one of the most talented and most sought-after multidisciplinary artists on the contemporary scene.

He has an impressive body of work in theatre, including his marathon seven-hour show, *The Seven Streams of the River Ota* (1994). He explains the play's remarkable length in these words: "Theatre is going back to its origins, that is: to performances five or six hours in length with several intermissions. For the spectators, it is really as if they were entering into another world."

Cirque du Soleil

Cirque du Soleil, one of the most original cultural enterprises of our era, had its beginnings in 1980 in Baie-Saint-Paul, Quebec, on the north bank of the St. Lawrence River.

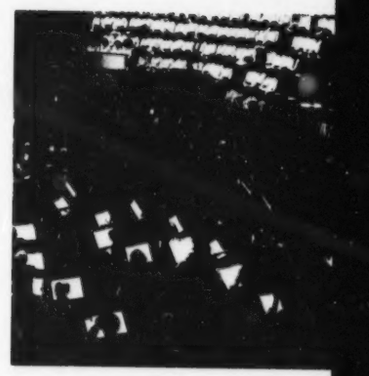
Since then, more than 18 million spectators on all five continents have seen at least one Cirque du Soleil performance.

The "magic" of Cirque du Soleil lies first in what the audience sees. But behind the scenes, there is a formidable organization working on marketing, research and development. In addition to the spectacular shows that have been presented in Asia, Europe and America on an ongoing basis since 1994, the company's subsidiary, Cirque du Soleil Images, has produced a film version of *Alegria*.

Explains co-founder Daniel Gauthier: "We have not forgotten our origins. We are just ordinary people. Our shows are for everyone, without distinction of age or class." ■

Montreal would not be what it is without its symphony orchestra, and the Montreal Symphony would not be what it is without Charles Dutoit. Since Charles Dutoit started conducting it in 1977, the orchestra of one hundred musicians has gained recognition as one of the ten best in the world.

Charles Dutoit has also taken many steps to bring the orchestra closer to the public: 75 recordings, which have won some 40 national and international awards, and a frequently daring performing repertoire.



The Montreal Symphony's influence stretches well beyond Canada's national boundaries. Since 1984, the orchestra has made five major tours to Europe, five to Japan, as well as others to Asia and South America. ■

The Montreal *Symphony* Orchestra

Racing driver Jacques Villeneuve is one of the most famous Canadians both at home and abroad. He has been racing on the Formula 1 circuit since 1995, following in the footsteps of his late father, Gilles, who died in a crash at the Belgian Grand Prix in 1982.

After a second-place finish in 1996, he won the World Drivers' Championship the following year at the age of 26. This achievement established his international reputation and earned him the affection of Canadians, who have never stopped considering him as one of theirs, even though he now lives in Monaco.

Jacques *Villeneuve*

"I am both a Canadian and a Quebecer," he said in June 1999 when being decorated by the Quebec government. "And if one day we travel to other planets, we will just say we come from planet Earth." ■

Louise *Fréchette*

In January 1998, Louise Fréchette became Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations Organization. Her appointment was the logical outcome of her climb to the highest ranks of the Canadian Public Service.

After heading the Latin America desk at the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Louise Fréchette became Deputy Minister of National Defence in 1995.

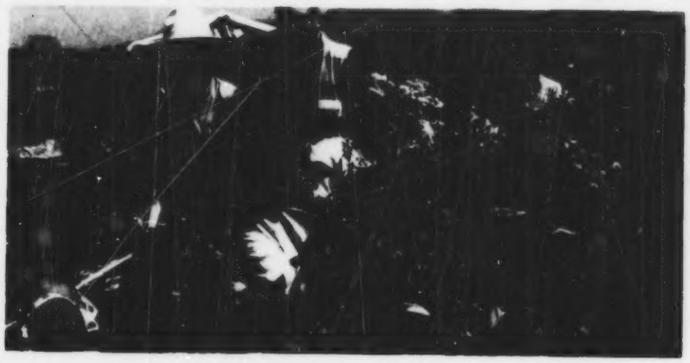
She has this to say about her new position: "My nationality is no secret for anyone here and that raises Canada's visibility. It is clear that I bring a certain personal and professional background that has been developed over the last 20 or 25 years, and it is only natural that this reflects the experiences I have had and the values I have acquired in my own country. In that sense, I have an approach to my job that is definitely influenced by the fact I am Canadian." ■

Céline *Dion*

No Canadian has ever had as much international success as Céline Dion, and very few artists of any nationality have moved and affected as many people. She has been a major force in popular music over the last decade.

She even left her youth at home, since by the age of 15 she was already an international star. "But I don't regret anything; I've never wanted to do anything else," she has said on several occasions.

Céline Dion has sung in all the venues where artists dream of performing: at the Oscar presentations, with the best orchestras in the world, at the Olympia in Paris and in the presence of the Pope. In this millennial time, she embodies success. And she's one of us. ■



Louise *Arbour*

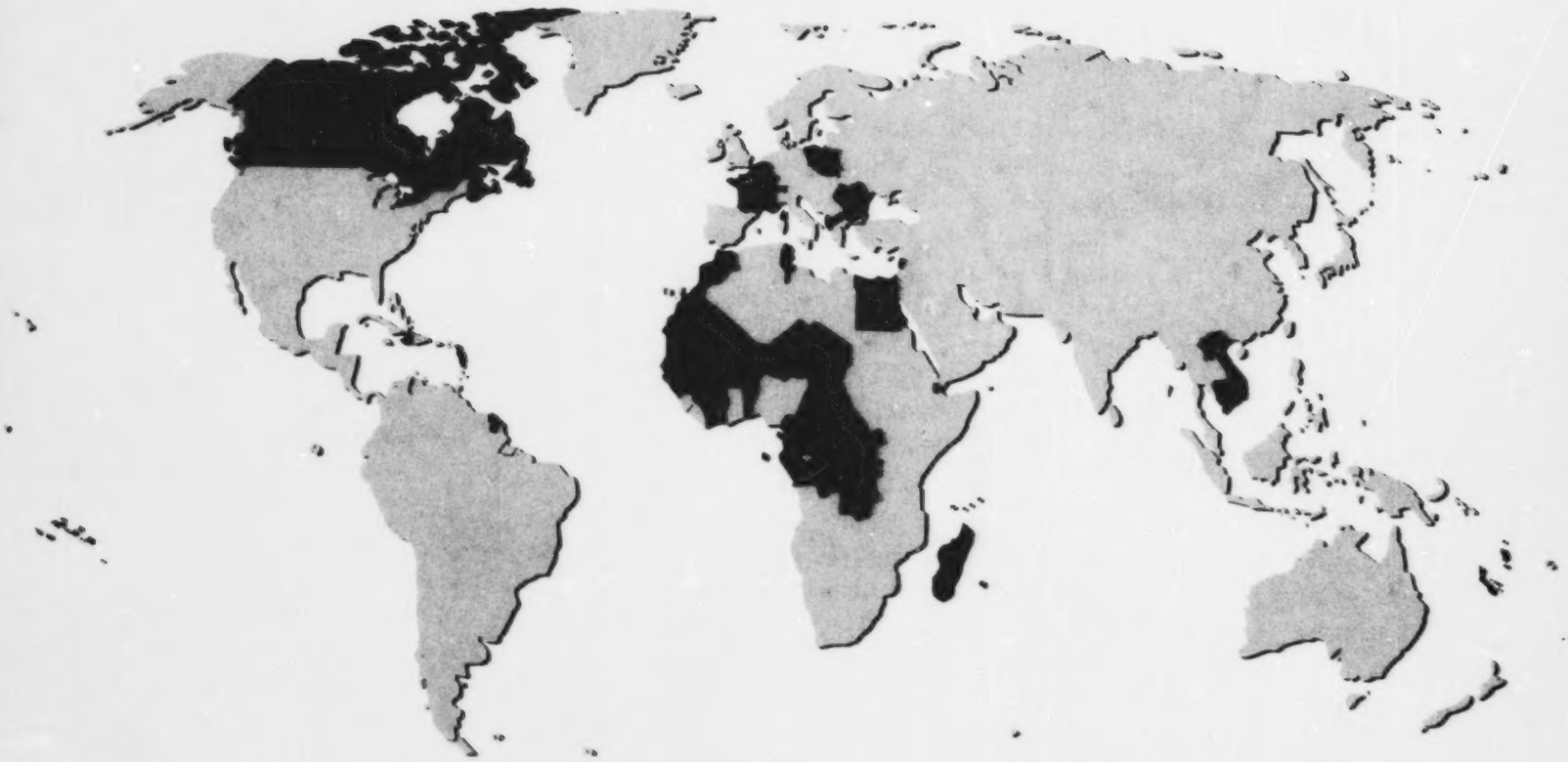
As a result of her appointment as Prosecutor for the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, Louise Arbour's name quickly became known in the international community.

Her mandate was to investigate the atrocities committed during the recent civil wars in these countries. A very tough job.

Just as she was starting her work in the former Yugoslavia, Louise Arbour expressed the following thoughts: "Crimes are committed by individuals, not by abstractions like nationalities. Similarly, victims are not abstractions, although they may be perceived as such when they are expressed in the thousands. Responsibility for justice is something that should concern everybody."

In 1999, Louise Arbour was appointed Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada. ■

The International *Francophonie*



■ Francophone countries

The *photographers*

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